THE
ONE RING™
MORIA™
THROUGH THE DOORS OF DURIN

# MORIA

Dimrill Dale: 1. mounds of Azanulbizar 2. Dimrill gate 3. Dimrill stair 4. Dimrill door ~ Old Moria: 5. the First hall 6. Durin's Bridge 7. the second hall 8. bottomless chasm ~ the Dwarrowdelf: 9. king's Road 10. king's hall 11. city gate 12. chamber of Mazarbul ~ the upper levels: 13. the high cistern 14. the gatehouse 15. the great gallery 16. tower of Durin ~ the Deeps: 17. the armouries 18. caves of Thrym Thistledeep 19. the ledge of woe 20. wailing stairs 21. den of forgotten stars 22. mithril vein 23. foundation of stone ~ the Road: a. b. c. halls of the Roadwardens 24. great west cave 25. west gate West Moria: 26. the imperishable hall 27. the doors of Durin 28. the mansions of Thrain I

to the
Redhorn
pass
Barazinbar
the dwarrowdelf
the endless stair
old
moria
Mirrormere
ght road
Dimrill
Dale
VERTINE
Caradhras
the dwarrowdelf
upper levels
old
moria
the deeps

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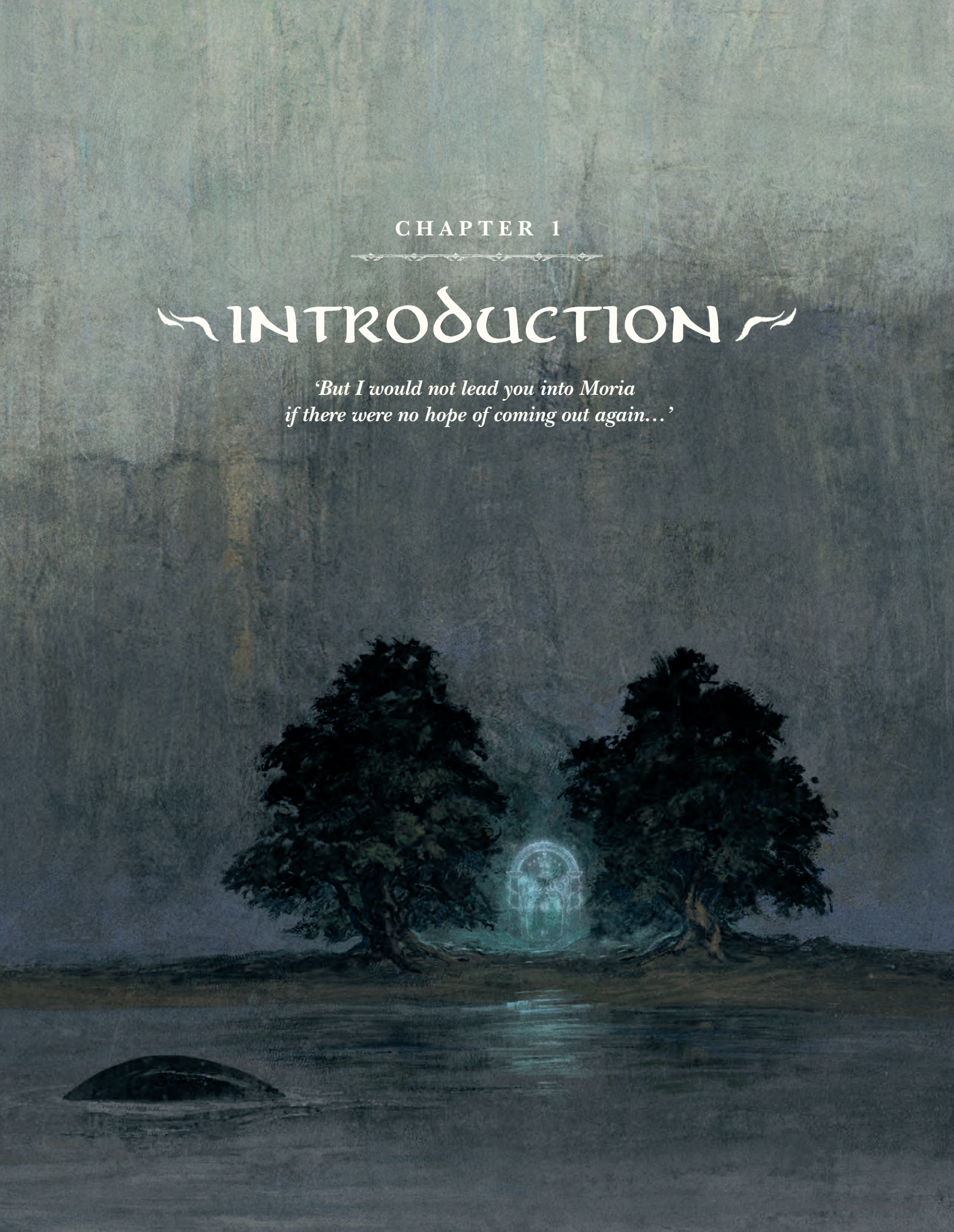
CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

*'But I would not lead you into Moria*
*if there were no hope of coming out again…'*



In days of old, Men and Elves and Dwarves built great cities and fortresses against the Shadow. Their names passed into legend — Nargothrond and Gondolin, Nogrod and Belegost, vanished Númenor — while their ruins lie drowned beneath the western sea. Of all those mighty works, only one survived to the Third Age. Khazad-dûm! Khazad-dûm! Next to it, the cities of Gondor are but newly built! Even the oldest trees in Fangorn do not recall a time when the Dwarves did not toil under the mountain. Ancient are the halls of Durin.

For it was Durin, called Deathless, who began the Dwarrowdelf, and Durin's heirs who dug deep and carved a city under stone. Their work began thousands of years ago, and though other hands and minds joined in the task, it is Durin's kin, the Longbeard Dwarves, who have the chief claim to Khazad-dûm. To them, Moria is more than a bulwark against a hostile world, more than a source of wealth, more than a city — it is home, and they will never, ever forget it.

But they cannot go there. They cannot return.

For though Khazad-dûm was the eldest and greatest of the fortresses of Elves or Men or Dwarves in Middle-earth, it was not the eldest or greatest fortress in the land — for in the north, the Enemy had raised yet taller walls, and built nightmare halls greater than the Dwarves could dream. The castle of Angband was mightier yet, and when that fortress fell, horrors of the Enemy fled south to escape the wrath of the Valar.

They hid beneath the roots of the mountains.

And, many centuries later, when the Dwarves dug too deep, they woke the slumbering horrors.

They woke Durin's Bane.

And the city fell.

The Dwarves fled, and ever since have wandered the world, dreaming of the day when they could return to the halls of their forefathers.

For what is broken can be remade.

# A Light in the Darkness

*But most of the Orcs of the Misty Mountains were scattered or destroyed in the Battle of Five Armies. The Eagles report that Orcs are gathering again from afar; but there is a hope that Moria is still free.*

For a thousand years, a shadow has lain on Moria. Durin's Bane forced the Dwarves to flee, and the ruins of the holy city of Khazad-dûm were occupied and defiled by Orcs and Goblins. The Dwarves tried several times to retake their city, most notably in the War of the Dwarves and Orcs following the murder of King Thrór, father of Thráin by the Orc-chief Azog, but they met only with bitter failure.

Then came the Battle of Five Armies. The host of Goblins that issued forth from the Misty Mountains included many from Moria. As everyone knows, that battle ended in a hard-won victory for the Free Peoples, and a great many Orcs were slain including Bolg the son of Azog. Suddenly, the noisome holes and Orc-pits of the Misty Mountains were nearly emptied of foes. Mount Gundabad was silent. Goblin-town was diminished (and the Great Goblin slain). It was safe to cross the High Pass again.

What, they whisper from the Iron Hills to the Blue Mountains, of Moria? How many of Moria's usurpers had perished at Erebor? Might it be possible, the Dwarves mutter, to *retake* Khazad-dûm, or at least reclaim some of its lost treasures?

Dáin Ironfoot, the King under the Mountain, has set his face against retaking the city. He alone once looked beyond the shadow of the gate, and he alone sensed something of Durin's Bane. There is work enough to be done in Erebor, declares Dáin, so he forbids his followers to attempt to reclaim Khazad-dûm for now.

As chieftain of the Longbeards and heir to Durin, Dáin's claim on Khazad-dûm is the strongest — but if he is unwilling to take this chance to strike while the Orcs are scattered, then surely anyone with courage and sharp axes may do so! Dáin's words bind his kin, but not other Dwarves and other treasure-hunters.

This, then, is the state of Moria in the Year 2965 of the Third Age, as far as any Dwarf or Man knows. It is a time when the Orcs are weakened, and when a band of heroes — or burglars — could enter the city and perhaps hope to come out again.

But what neither Man nor Dwarf knows is what waits beyond the Shadow of the Gate.

## Overview

Moria is staggeringly ancient and complex; the work of making and remaking the Dwarrowdelf is never done. Therefore, this guide focusses on one section of the city's history, the years around 2965 when the Free Peoples risked entering the dreaded mines, on expeditions seeking treasure, vengeance, or the lost secrets of the Dwarves. The last of these expeditions, of

course, was the attempt by Balin son of Fundin to reclaim the city — that expedition began in 2989 and is outside the time period covered by this guide (in the spirit of *The Lord of the Rings*, it is covered in an appendix — beginning on page XX).

Even before the Battle of Five Armies, a few brave travellers did risk entering Moria. The Wizard Tharkun, called Gandalf or Mithrandir in other lands, went searching for Thráin son of Thrór in the darkness of the mines; it is also known that Aragorn entered Moria in his errantries. Others must have taken the Moria-road in times of need.

The assumption of this guide, then, is that the Player-heroes are either trying to travel through Moria, or are part of a small expedition into the ruins. The prospect of retaking the city or fully exploring the mines is beyond the scope of even a full campaign.

- This *Introduction* describes the history and shape of the place now called Moria.
- *And At The Gates, The Trumpets Rang* discusses several groups interested in Moria in the present era. These groups might be Patrons or rivals to the Player-heroes.
- *Journeys in the Dark* contains a set of Journey rules adjusted for underground exploration, as well as some Moria-specific Fellowship Phase undertakings.
- *Fell Foes* lists the Orcs and other enemies that may be found in the city — and rules for risking an encounter with Durin's Bane.
- *The Mansions of the Dwarves* is the largest part of the book, describing Landmarks and hazards in the various regions of Moria.
- *Appendix A: Balin's Expedition* describes the largest expedition to brave Moria; Balin's expedition from 2989–2994.
- *Appendix B: Treasures of the Dwarves* lists treasures both mundane and magical that might be found in Moria.

# The City and the Mines

*'There must have been a mighty crowd of Dwarves here at one time,' said Sam, ' and every one of them busier than badgers for five hundred years to make all this, and most in hard rock too! What did they do it all for? They didn't live in these darksome holes surely?'*

*'These are not holes,' said Gimli. 'This is the great realm and city of the Dwarrowdelf.'*

'Moria' means 'Black Pit' in Elvish, and this name passed into common usage so long ago that few recall its origin, or that it was never intended to refer to the whole complex. The Dwarves, always being precise about such terms (and quick to take offence when they are misapplied) draw a distinction between the *Mines of Moria* and the *Dwarrowdelf* or City of the Dwarves.

The tale began in the First Age, when — as the song relates — Durin woke and walked alone. Durin was the eldest of the Dwarves. It was he who discovered the sacred lake of Mirrormere, and he who first began to dig and build beneath the mountains. Over many centuries, and with much labour of the Dwarves, Durin's first hall grew into a great city. This city, the Dwarrowdelf, lies mostly beneath Mount Silvertine (Celebdil, in the Elven tongue), on the eastern side of the Misty Mountains.

Tunnels and mines extend out in many directions from this city, reaching so far west that the Dwarves built a road under the mountains, connecting it to a gate in the west near the Elven kingdom of Hollin.

Originally, the Elves of Hollin used 'Moria' to refer to the mines and the long road from the West-gate to the city of the Dwarrowdelf; after its blazing lamps were put out and the city plunged into darkness, the word was used for the whole city. Thus, up until the Year 1980, *'Moria'* had a much more limited meaning, and could not be applied to the city proper. After the uncovering of Durin's Bane, all was shadow and fire.

From East-gate to West-gate, the realm of Moria spans some forty miles. The mines run north from the city about twenty miles, and south for another ten or so, but the caves and shafts twist and writhe, so it is hard to reckon the full extent of the city.

The Dwarrowdelf extends vertically as well as horizontally. The Dwarves took the level of the East-gate as the reference point for reckoning heights within the mountain, and called this the Level of the Gates or the First Level. The floors above that line are referred to as 'levels' — thus, one floor above that baseline is the Second Level, two the Third Level and so on. Anything below that level is considered part of the Deeps — one below is First Deep, two below is Second Deep and so forth. The city extended to the Twelfth Level and the Ninth Deep, but tunnels and outposts went far higher and deeper.

## A Tale of Years of the City

### THE FIRST AGE:

- Khazad-dûm is founded by Durin I, Father of the Longbeards. It endures and prospers, even as the world beyond its doors is wracked by war and upheaval.

### THE SECOND AGE:

- **CIRCA 1:** A Balrog of Morgoth flees the wrath of the Valar, and hides under the mountains.
- **C. 20–60:** The Dwarves ally with Men of the Anduin Valley. This friendship endures for many generations of Men, and the Dwarves build great cities and forge weapons for their allies.
- **40:** Dwarves fleeing the destruction of the western cities take refuge in Khazad-dûm. These Dwarves are not of the line of the Longbeards, and there is some grumbling and strife between the kindreds. Still, the city's prosperity grows.
- **C. 750:** High Elves settle in Eregion. They build the city of Ost-in-Edhil and establish the land of Hollin. They trade with the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm for *Mithril*, and the two peoples become close friends. Together, these Elven-smiths and the Dwarf-lords become the greatest craftsmen to ever dwell east of the Sea.
- **C. 1000:** The citadel of West Moria is established.
- **C. 1500:** The Elves study ring-lore with the aid of a disguised Sauron, and reach the height of their achievements. They forge the Rings of Power.
- **C. 1600:** Sauron makes the One Ring, and war begins.

  Dwarven tradition insists that Celebrimbor gave Durin the first of the Seven before the One was forged; other tales hold that Sauron captured the Seven along with the Nine, and gave them to the Dwarves in an attempt to bewitch them.
- **1697:** Eregion is destroyed; the doors of Khazad-dûm are closed and the city besieged for a time. The Dwarves block up most of the entrances to their realm. The confederation with the Men of the Anduin is broken, and the kingdoms of Men are destroyed and scattered.
- **1701:** Sauron is defeated by the Númenóreans and driven from Eriador. He continues to control the East, beyond the Great River, while Númenor commands the coasts. Caught between two great powers, the Dwarves ready their defences. Moria is fortified.
- **2251:** The Nine Ringwraiths appear for the first time.
- **3262–3319:** Sauron is captured by the Númenóreans. He seduces their leaders, and Númenor is destroyed.
- **3320:** The realms of Númenor-in-exile, Arnor and Gondor, are founded.
- **3441:** The Last Alliance of Men and Elves defeats Sauron. A small army of Dwarves led by Durin IV joins the fray. Isildur claims the One Ring.

### THE THIRD AGE:

- **861:** The North-Kingdom of Arnor is divided into three lesser realms.
- **C. 1300:** Orcs attack the Dwarves in the Misty Mountains. The realm of Angmar arises.
- **1409:** Angmar invades the North Kingdom.
- **1636:** Plague ravages the land, and many Dwarves perish in the cramped confines of the mountain.
- **1975:** An army of Men of Arnor, Gondor and Elves defeat the Witch-king at Fornost.
- **1980:** The Balrog awakens and slays Durin VI.
- **1981:** Náin I, son of Durin VI is slain. The Dwarves flee. Moria is lost. King Thráin I escapes, bearing Durin's Ring.
- **1999:** Thráin I founds the Kingdom Under The Mountain.
- **C. 2480:** The Orcs expand their fortresses in the Misty Mountains, under the direction of Sauron. They inhabit Moria and defile its halls. Moria becomes known as a place of uttermost dread and terror.
- **C. 2700:** Azog the Orc-chieftain claims Moria.
- **2770:** Smaug the Dreadful conquers the Kingdom under the Mountain. Thrór flees, carrying with him Durin's Ring.
- **2790:** Thrór returns to Moria and enters it. He is slain on the doorstep by Azog the Orc, and branded as a beggar.
- **2793:** Thráin II son of Thrór gathers all the Dwarves and begins a great war upon the Orcs. They sack many Orc-lairs.
- **2799:** The battle of Azanulbizar (Nanduhirion in the Elvish tongue) in Dimrill Dale. The Dwarves are victorious, but at great cost — fully half their number are slain, including Náin III of the Iron Hills. His son Dáin slays Azog. Thráin II argues they should enter Moria, but Dáin and the other Dwarves gainsay him — they have lost too many to dare the deed, and a shadow still lies upon its halls.
- **C. 2810:** Thráin II and his followers, including his son Thorin and his lieutenant Balin, wander Middle-earth and eventually settle in the Blue Mountains.
- **2841:** Thráin II and some of his followers, including Balin, attempt to return to Erebor. They are waylaid in Mirkwood, and Thráin is captured by servants of the Necromancer. He is imprisoned in Dol Guldur, and the Ring is taken from him.
- **2848:** Gandalf enters Moria in search of Thráin; he passes from the East all the way to the West-gate, but finds no sign of the Dwarf.

- **2850:** Gandalf finds Thráin in Dol Guldur.
- **2941:** Thorin and company return to Erebor; the Dragon is slain and the Kingdom restored. Many Orcs are slain in the Battle of Five Armies, including Bolg son of Azog. The White Council attack Dol Guldur and drive out the Necromancer; there is no sign of Durin's Ring. Dáin Ironfoot becomes King under the Mountain as Dáin II.
- **2949:** Bilbo receives Gandalf and Balin at Bag End.
- **2965:** After the deaths of so many Goblins at Erebor, some heroes risk entering Moria once again. **The Present Day**, for purposes of this guide.
- **2980:** Aragorn son of Arathorn returns from his errantries in Gondor and Rohan, and dwells for a time in the forest of Lórien. Afterwards, he enters Moria by the East-gate.
- **2989:** Balin leads an expedition to reclaim Moria. No word ever comes back to Erebor.
- **2994:** Recorded Death of Balin in the *Book of Mazarbul*.
- **3018:** The creature Gollum enters Moria to hide from the Elves and the forces of Sauron.
- **3019:** The Fellowship of the Ring passes through Moria. Gandalf the Grey destroys Durin's Bridge and slays the Balrog.

This, then, is the tally of the years of Moria — for more than six thousand years, it was the mansion of Durin's folk. It was abandoned a thousand years ago, and has been the abode of Orcs for almost as long. In the Fourth Age, it may be that the Dwarves at last reclaim their mansion, likely under the reign of Durin VII, last of his name.

CHAPTER 2

# AND AT THE GATES, THE TRUMPETS RANG

*'It is now many years,' said Glóin, 'that a shadow of disquiet fell upon our people. Whence it came we did not at first perceive. Words began to be whispered in secret; it was said we were hemmed in a narrow place, and that greater wealth and splendour would be found in a wider world.'*

*Moria.* The name is heavy as iron, and dark as uttermost night. It is known to all who dwell in Middle-earth as a place of dread and terror. Why, then, would anyone dare enter such a place? Who goes down into the Black Pit? Even if the peril of the Orcs is diminished after the Battle of Five Armies, the ruins are immeasurably dangerous.

Even when observed in game terms, Moria is not a 'classical' dungeon, of the sort found in many tabletop roleplaying games. It is not a series of rooms linked by neat corridors, each room containing a suitably balanced group of wacky monsters or some over-the-top puzzle. There certainly are monsters and riddles down in the dark, but more than anything else, Moria is an empty ruin, an endless desolation.

So, why shall your Player-heroes cross the threshold of doomed Khazad-dûm?

# Moria in Your Game

*'I too once passed the Dimrill Gate,' said Aragorn quietly, 'but though I also came out again, the memory is very evil. I do not wish to enter Moria a second time.'*

A key question: is this to be a quick excursion into Moria, or a series of expeditions?

A single adventure in Moria emphasises the horror and danger of the dark underground domain, plunging the Player-heroes into a labyrinth of unlikely perils, and makes the experience so harrowing that they swear never to return.

A longer expedition (like Balin's attempt to reclaim the realm) needs to take a slower, more measured approach, and pay more attention to the physical geography and factions within the city. One adventure might involve discovering a long-lost secret entrance into Moria, or forcing a route through the ruins to a particular gate; the next adventure builds on that success, pushing deeper and deeper into the ruins.

A second important question: are the Player-heroes going into Moria at the behest of a Patron, or is this their own scheme?

A Patron lets the Loremaster assign objectives to the Company, which is a very useful way of structuring expeditions into Moria — instead of wandering about in the darkness at random. Many sample Patrons are presented in this chapter, and unused Patrons can become rivals or encounters along the way. On the other hand, if a particular Player-hero strongly desires to recover some specific treasure or relic from Khazad-dûm, that's wonderful; player enthusiasm is the best driver of adventure.

A third question: what is the composition of the Company? As a rule of thumb: the more Dwarves in your party, the more often you will return to Moria! Dwarves have a strong interest in reclaiming their ancient halls, but heroes of other backgrounds have fewer reasons to enter. If you intend to run a campaign centred around Moria, then encourage the players to have lots of Dwarves in the Company. (Not necessarily Dwarves of Durin's Folk; Dwarves of other clans also work perfectly.)

# CAMPAIGN FOCUS

*'The world must change and some other power than ours must come before Durin's Folk walk again in Moria.'*

The Player-heroes are unlikely to be the ones who defeat Durin's Bane — but that should not be their quest. They should enter Moria with some other purpose in mind, either of their own initiative or directed by a Patron.

The Company's goals will no doubt evolve over time; they might be drawn to Moria by the lure of gold, get into a prolonged conflict with the Orc-tribes, ally with a Patron for aid, and then pursue the Patron's goals for a while. The ruin is large enough for many sorts of adventure.

## SEARCHING FOR TREASURE

Gandalf once said that the Orcs have plundered Moria, leaving nothing of worth in the upper halls. He may be right, but the common perception of Moria in the tales of Men is that the underground complex is full of treasure. The wealth of the Dwarves is fabled across the world, although accounts confuse the golden hoard of the Lonely Mountain for the treasures of Moria. Adventurers motivated by treasure-hunting could certainly risk the darkness of Khazad-dûm, either on their own behalf or for a Patron like a Dwarf seeking some heirloom.

Searching for a specific treasure, or a treasury like the Vault of Uruktharbun (see page XX), works better for a long campaign than just hunting for loot — but do not underestimate the primal appeal of looking for pale, enchanted gold!

**SUGGESTED PATRONS:** Fróra, Daza, Mjolin

### LEGENDS OF TREASURE

As Gandalf said, the upper halls have been plundered by Orcs, so the Player-heroes cannot just wander in and start grabbing chests of gold. Give them a goal by seeding rumours and legends of lost treasures — of family vaults sealed with secret keys, of the fabled treasuries of the deeps, of specific relics and jewels that might still be found. Balin, for example, went looking for Durin's Axe and Durin's Helm, and knew about the Armouries of the Third Deep.

### STEALING FROM THE ORCS

Of course, if the Orcs have plundered the upper halls, then it is clear where the treasure is — the Orcs have it! Most of Moria's gold and Mithril was sent as tribute to Gundabad and Mordor, or lost over the years, but there is still much wealth in terms of gold and gems to be found in the various Orc strongholds of Moria — guarded by hosts of Orcs!

### LORE OF MORIA

Much was lost in the fall of Khazad-dûm. Not just physical records and annals, but also much secret knowledge perished along with its keepers when Durin's Bane arose. Even things that were once relatively common knowledge, like the location and word of opening of the Hollin Gate, have been lost over the centuries. At the same time, the Dwarves salvaged a great deal when they fled, and they preserved the lore of their ancestors with great determination, handing secrets down from one Dwarf to the next. Much is remembered about Moria in the halls of Erebor or the Blue Mountains, but the lore is fragmented, like a piece of fine stonework riven with deep cracks that must be filled, and missing pieces that must be found or remade.

Player-heroes might find lore about locations in Moria:

- From lore-masters and Patrons
- From family secrets jealously held by certain Dwarven lineages
- Through Fellowship Undertakings in Dwarven strongholds
- From records or inscriptions in the ruin itself
- In dreams or from ghostly apparitions

### RIVAL THIEVES

Player-heroes emerging from Moria laden down with looted gold have just started their adventure. Thieves from Tharbad (see page XX) or rival treasure-hunters will seek to rob them of their ill-gotten gains at the first opportunity. After all, it is a lot easier to take from exhausted and battered adventurers than it is to brave the darkness of Moria.

Furthermore, any treasure in Moria belongs to the Dwarves, and they do not take kindly to thieves. The Company can get away with a few coins or gemstones, but if they come out with Mithril or a jewel or relic of Dwarven make, then they will be pursued to the ends of the earth by vengeful Dwarves. Since ancient times, the Dwarves have feuded with those who kept their treasure from them, and they are miserly when it comes to rewarding burglars. A wise thief takes a leaf from Bilbo's book, and gets the terms of recompense in writing in advance…

## SEARCHING FOR MITHRIL

Moria-silver is found nowhere else in Middle-earth, and is precious beyond price. The metal is magical indeed, and Elves and Dwarves wrought many of their greatest wonders from it. Since the fall of Moria, no more *Mithril* has been mined, except by the Orcs. The Dwarves left behind storehouses full of ingots, and the mines were not yet exhausted and it might still be possible to find Mithril ore in the Deeps.

To find Moria-silver, the Company must delve into the Deeps, into the mines themselves, to recover what remains. Alternatively, their quest might be to track down Orcs who have secured a supply of Mithril, and slay them before they make some mischief with the metal — the forges of Isengard and Gorgoroth are hungry for Mithril, too.

**SUGGESTED PATRONS:** Fróra, Nál, Saruman

### FINDING MITHRIL

Mithril is found only deep within Moria. Actually *mining* Mithril is a slow and hazardous process; instead the Player-heroes should set their sights on either finding an old Dwarven stockpile of Mithril ingots in a treasury, or stealing Mithril mined by the Orcs.

- Mithril stockpiles exist in The Fortress of Malech (see page XX), on Nan and Gilim (see page XX), in the Den of Forgotten Stars (see page XX) and the Goblin Village (see page XX).

Mithril might also be found in any hoard in Moria as the main material of a Precious Object.

### JEALOUS EYES

**No Mithril has come out of Moria in a thousand years, making the existing works of the Dwarves irreplaceable and priceless — Bilbo's coat of Mithril-rings was valuable not merely because of its craftsmanship, but because it represented in itself a sizeable percentage of all the Mithril in the hands of the Free Folk! If more Mithril suddenly appears, it will draw the attention of the Dwarves — as well as other powers. Mithril is a potent substance, of value to Elven-smiths and Wizards and would-be ring-makers...**

## THE PERILOUS PATH

Circumstances might force a Company of travellers to take the dark road under the mountains. If snowstorms block the passes, the Company could choose to take the Moria-road to cross between Eriador and Rhovanion. Equally, if they must hide from the sight of powerful enemies, they could vanish into the darkness.

Obviously, taking the Moria-road is very much a last resort; only a fool would take such a route if they had any other choice. A Loremaster *could* arrange events to push their Company into Khazad-dûm, but it's better to just pile woes and threats upon the Company until the players decide that their best option is indeed this terrible path.

A one-shot journey through Moria plays as a gauntlet of monsters and perils; the Company must find their way through the labyrinth as quickly as they can, exploring to find the correct route that leads on to the next region. The longer they delay, the greater the risk that the Orcs will come upon them and bring their journey to a premature and bloody end.

## VENGEANCE

The upper levels have been picked clean of treasure; Mithril is lost in the flooded mines, and the Moria-road is a death-trap. Vengeance, though — there is vengeance aplenty to be found here. If the Company have a vendetta against a particular Orc-chief, then they may be compelled to enter this dreadful fortress to slay their quarry. It was vengeance against Azog that brought the armies of the Dwarves to the Dimrill Dale.

Possible targets for vengeance:

### MORIA ORC-CHIEFS

| ROLL | TARGET |
|---|---|
| 1 | *Malech One-eye*, Chieftain of the Moria-orcs, see page XX |
| 2 | *Thu the Firespeaker*, Servant of the Balrog, see page XX |
| 3 | *Yagul the Snatcher*, Infamous Slaver, see page XX |
| 4 | *Hagrot the Sneak*, the master of the Twenty-first Hall, see page XX |
| 5 | *Granny Goblin*, Underworld Matriarch, see page XX |
| 6 | *The Mauler of the Armouries*, see page XX |

A truly cruel Loremaster could suggest Gorgol son of Bolg (see page XX) as the target; Gorgol is unassailable in Mount Gundabad, but could be lured to Moria if Malech's reign collapsed.

**SUGGESTED PATRONS:** None — give the Player-heroes a reason to hate that Villain, instead of having them exact vengeance on behalf of another.

**FINDING THE FOE:** The first step in any mission of vengeance is finding the enemy. While each target has a particular haunt in Moria, they may not be at home when the Player-heroes come calling. Spying on the target — or allying with another adversary — might be needed to locate the hated quarry.

**SLAYING THE FOE:** How do the Player-heroes slay their enemy? Murder in the dark, or a pitched battle against the target's minions? Or do they engineer events to make their revenge easier — say, by undermining Malech's rule, or freeing Yagul's captives?

**FLEEING MORIA:** Killing the Great Goblin led to the Battle of Five Armies. Slaying King Thrór sparked the War of the Dwarves and Orcs. What have the Company's deeds unleashed upon Middle-earth?

## QUESTING FOR RING-LORE

The Dwarves of Moria preserved fragments of the lore of the Ring-smiths of Eregion, and for long years afterwards toiled in secret, trying to make their own magic rings. With great effort, they were able to create some lesser rings, but never succeeded in making a Ring of Power. Still, the lore they hid is of incalculable value to those who still understand how to use it…

Such Ring-lore might be hidden in the Lost Citadel of the Ring-smiths (see page XX), or in the Chambers of Narvi (see page XX).

**SUGGESTED PATRONS:** Nál, Saruman

**FINDING THE LOST CITADEL:** The Lost Citadel of the Ring-smiths is one of the best-kept secrets of Moria. There are few records of the place, and no living soul knows where to find it. The Player-heroes must search all of West Moria to even have a chance of discovering the hidden door.

**OPENING THE DOOR:** The magic door that guards the secrets of the Rings can itself only be opened with a magic ring. There are several lesser rings to be found in the depths, or the heroes might find a ring in some other treasure-hoard.

**RETURNING WITH THE SECRET:** Few in Middle-earth know anything of Ring-lore any more — the Elven-smiths of Eregion are gone, and so too are the Dwarven masters. The world shall not know the likes of Celebrimbor or Narvi again. Even among the Wise, only Saruman has the craft and cunning to successfully make a new Ring. That said, there are many who are not accounted among the Wise who covet Rings, and who would foolishly attempt to use the secrets of Ring-lore for their own ends, or trade those secrets to the Lord of the Rings who dwells in the land of Mordor. Anyone leaving Moria with the records of the Ring-smiths will find little safety under the open sky.

### PATRONS… AND RIVALS

One Company's Patron might be another Company's mortal foe. You can turn any of the Patrons in this chapter into recurring foes who seek to stymie or block the Player-heroes' efforts in Moria. Fróra might be the best friend of a group of adventurers who explore Moria on her behalf, but strike down a band of thieves who serve a rival with furious vengeance.

# Moria & the Wider World

*Only Gimli lifted up his head; a smouldering fire was in his eyes. On all the others a dread fell at the mention of that name. Even to the hobbits it was a legend of vague fear.*

The ancient city of Khazad-dûm is gone; only the Black Pit remains. No-one save Orcs and Goblins has lived here for centuries — so what is the place of Moria in the context of Middle-earth at the end of the Third Age, and who might walk through its doors now?

## Dwarves

First and foremost, we must speak of Durin's Folk. Khazad-dûm was their mansion and their home, the hall of Durin of old and the foundation of their fabulous wealth. They remember Moria as it was in its days of glory, when the halls blazed with light, and they pass on these memories from one generation to the next, immortalising them in song and artistry. As Gimli said, *'[that] is the land where our fathers worked of old, and we have wrought the image of those mountains into many works of metal and of stone, and into many songs and tales.'*

Now, the Dwarves are a hardy folk, able to endure many sorrows. Age upon age, they build and make splendid the world, and age upon age, the forces of darkness and the malice of foes tear down their works. Their halls in the West were drowned; their halls in the mountains, like Erebor, taken by Dragons. These losses are on some level to be expected — this is Arda Marred, after all, and the Dwarves have fought against greedy Dragons and Orcs since the Elder Days. But the loss of Moria was singularly sudden and unexpected — the kingdom seemed secure and prosperous, and the only threat — the Witch-king of Angmar — had been routed within living memory. The fall of Moria was not the result of a long war or grim decline, but was an abrupt shock, a catastrophe unforeseen.

For many years after the fall of Moria, none of Durin's Folk dared return to their fathers' halls. They laboured elsewhere, and the discovery of the wealth under the Lonely Mountain and its fabulous Arkenstone seemed almost like recompense for the loss of Khazad-dûm. The kings of Durin's folk ruled their new kingdom, and made no attempt to retake their former home. Likely, the horrors of Durin's Bane lay heavily on them, and tales of the darkness were passed down along with tales of the glory of the old kingdom.

As is related elsewhere, after the calamity of Smaug destroyed Erebor (though at least the coming of the Dragon was not wholly without warning, for other Dwarf-halls had fallen in similar fashion) King Thrór gave the kingship to Thráin and returned to Moria along with his servant Nár. There, he was slain by Azog, and thus began the War of the Dwarves and Orcs. Durin's Folk rallied to Thráin's call to arms, and so did the other Dwarven peoples.

After the grievous victory at the Battle of Azanulbizar, Thráin declared that Khazad-dûm had been reclaimed, but Dáin gainsayed him, declaring: *"the world must change, and some other power than ours must come before Durin's Folk walk again in Moria."* At the same time, those who were not of Durin's Folk but joined Thráin's cause said: *"Khazad-dûm was not our Fathers' house. What is it to us, unless a hope of treasure?"*

There was much weeping to be done, for the victory had been a costly one, and none of the Dwarves save Thráin had the heart to brave the darkness. They left the Dimrill Dale and dispersed again.

That day, nearly two centuries ago, began the race for Khazad-dûm.

### LONELINESS OF THE MOUNTAIN

**This section contains far, far more Loremaster characters than you should ever use! Meeting another explorer should be a very rare event – the lost city must feel lost and abandoned. Pick the characters that most appeal to you and your group, or those that arise naturally from your story.**

**If your campaign spans multiple years, then have one of these travellers arrive every few years.**

## Durin's Folk

Alone of all living Dwarves, only Dáin Ironfoot has seen beyond the shadow of the gate. He knows that Durin's Bane waits in the darkness, and he has forbidden his followers from setting foot in Moria. None of Durin's Folk would ever directly disobey his word, of course — Dáin is King under the Mountain, and his word is law. However, in secret, there are whispers and grumbling that now is the time to retake Khazad-dûm, and Durin's Folk should return to Durin's halls. These Dwarves will not return to Moria openly, but they have begun to lay the groundwork for an eventual expedition. Certain wealthy

Longbeard Dwarves have begun to quietly hire adventurers in the taverns of Dale and Lake-town, or in the inns at Bree or Tharbad, for missions to scout out the approaches of Moria and to determine how many Orcs still lurk in the depths.

One of these Dwarves is Balin, son of Fundin. He is a cousin of King Dáin and one of the Twelve Companions of Thorin Oakenshield, making him one of the most important nobles in Erebor. If Balin were to openly defy Dáin's decree, it would be a grave matter indeed. For now, Balin bides his time, gathering information about the state of Moria and the road south. He even visited his old friend, the noted burglar Bilbo Baggins, in 2949, possibly to see if Bilbo was willing to undertake another secret mission to another lost Dwarf-hold.

So, even if Durin's Folk are forbidden by their King from returning to Moria, Dáin said nothing about hiring scouts, burglars and adventurers to investigate the possibility of a return — and such rogues would need close supervision, of course, lest they make off with treasures that rightfully belong to the Dwarves. Why, a Dwarf might need to follow his employees into Moria to provide hands-on management…

## *Fróra, Daughter of Dwalin*

**A young Dwarf, Fróra is the daughter of the famous Dwalin of the Twelve Companions, and the niece of Balin. She was but a child when her father went on the Quest of Erebor, and his success transformed the fortunes of Fróra, elevating her from the daughter of a smith to a princess of the Kingdom under the Mountain.**

**For a time, this sudden glory changed Fróra for the worse; she grew to be an arrogant hellraiser back in Erebor, known for getting drunk and starting fights, or throwing money around Dale. To teach the girl proper Dwarven discipline and modesty, King Dáin ordered that she be sent to the Blue Mountains (suspecting, rightly, that Fróra was the sort of Dwarf who would benefit from a few years wandering and adventuring).**

**However, Fróra is close to her uncle Balin, and shares his dream of reclaiming Moria. Instead of going to the Blue Mountains, or roaming Middle-earth at errantry, Fróra seeks adventurers to scout out Moria. She has a small fortune at her disposal, and all the tales that Balin told her as a child. She has great enthusiasm for the thought of returning to Khazad-dûm, and believes it to be her great mission, just like recovering the Mountain was her father's task in life.**

**OCCUPATION:** Dwarf-princess

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Eager, Lordly

### ENCOUNTERING FRÓRA

Fróra can be encountered anywhere along the upper Anduin valley, or on the road to the Blue Mountains. She knows she must avoid openly defying King Dáin, so she does not encamp near Moria, instead travelling around Wilderland and Eriador with her entourage (a mix of Dwarves and Dalish-folk). Fróra travels in style where she can; when in Dale, she rides around in a gilded carriage. Now that she is in the Wild where there are no paved roads, she makes do with a fine palfrey from Rohan and travelling garb studded with gemstones.

She knows how to use her wealth and reputation to impress, and can tell the tale of the Quest of Erebor with such verve that one would swear that she had been one of the Twelve Companions. When encountering the Player-heroes, she will first try to overawe them so they understand they are dealing with Dwarven royalty. She is impressed by competence and bravery, not wisdom. In conversation, she is archly aristocratic and formal, but with enough of an undercurrent of mischief to make her likeable.

### LETTERS HOME TO BALIN

Fróra regularly sends updates back to her uncle in Erebor, but she takes precautions to ensure that Balin's preparations for a return to Moria are not revealed to King Dáin or any other rivals. Her letters are written in a cipher, and she sends them only by trusted couriers who will deliver them directly into Balin's hand. Player-heroes travelling to Lake-town or the Mountain may be employed as messengers to Balin.

Alternatively, the Player-heroes might come across one of her letters on the corpse of a courier, and trace it back to her.

### FRÓRA AS A PATRON

Unlike elder Patrons, Fróra is too young and inexperienced a Dwarf to be accounted wise. What she does have is plenty of ready money, and a singular goal in mind. She will pay for information about the current state of Moria — have the Orcs returned, and if so, how great are their numbers? Is the main entrance passable? What other entrances are there? What can be found within? Above all, she wants to know what King Dáin saw beyond the shadow of the gate…

**FELLOWSHIP BONUS:** +1

**ADVANTAGE:** *The Wealth of Erebor*

Gain 1 point of Treasure for each Player-hero in the Company when choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to visit Fróra.

## *Lord Mjolin of Harmelt*

As described in *Ruins of the Lost Realm* (page 25) Mjolin rules the impoverished Dwarf-halls of Harmelt, in the south of the Ered Luin. While Harmelt was once famed for its rich gold mine, the veins of precious metal are worked out and the hold is failing.

### MJOLIN AS A PATRON

Mjolin is desperate for a new source of wealth — desperate enough to risk the Black Pit. Obviously, he could not mount an expedition directly; not only would that mean disobeying the commandments of Dáin Ironfoot, but it would risk exposing the problems of his clan. Therefore, Mjolin would have to work in secret — perhaps hiring a band of "not-Dwarves" to sneak into Moria as burglars and look for treasure.

**FELLOWSHIP BONUS:** +0

**ADVANTAGE:** *Secrets of Rune-scribing*

By choosing the Meet Patron Undertaking to visit Mjolin, one Player-hero in the Company may upgrade a piece of war gear with a *Rune-scored* Enchanted Reward. The Reward lasts only until the start of the next Fellowship Phase.

## *Guldi the Watcher*

Longbeard Dwarves brood on old offences. Sometimes, they sink into shadow, letting obsessions consume them. Guldi is one such Dwarf; he listened to the tales of lost Khazad-dûm, and dreamed of pale enchanted gold lost in the dark. After a time, working at the smithy was not enough for him. His mind wandered, his beard grew long and tangled, and he lost all interest in food or merriment. In his dreams, he walked the halls of his ancestors.

Now, after years of anguish, Guldi lurks outside Moria. He dares not go in – he remembers Dáin's warning, and will not disobey his King – not yet. He contents himself, and satiates the madness that gnaws at his mind, by hunting down those who rob from Khazad-dûm.

What Guldi does not know is that his mind has already cracked. He himself goes into Moria in search of treasure; once back on the surface, he waylays innocent travellers, accuses them of thievery, and then 'finds' the treasures he took on their bodies. He has no idea that he is a murderous rogue, and believes himself to be defending the honour of

the Dwarves. He might even lead a company of adventurers into Moria, then turn on them when they are outside...

**OCCUPATION:** Wanderer

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURE:** Crazed

### *Ibin the Ring-seeker*

There are fewer Dwarf-maidens than Dwarf-men, and not all wish to marry. Ibin fell in love with one such maid, Alfrigga, and begged her for her hand. Now, Alfrigga was both a scholar of history and a distant cousin of the line of Durin, and she laughingly declared that she would wed Ibin only if he brought her the Ring of her family. Some believe that the ring was lost with Durin VI when Durin's Bane woke up, or that Durin's son Náin held it last. Others whispered that the ring was lost when King Thrór fell — but all the whispered rumours agreed that it must be in Moria.

Ibin did not care about the provenance or importance of the ring, but agreed to recover it so that he might wed Alfrigga. The other Dwarves — even Alfrigga — begged him to reconsider this foolish quest, but Ibin's mind was set.

Ibin is a brave fool, with no understanding of the scale of the task ahead of him — and likely to bring doom upon anyone who travels with him. But Beren's quest seemed even more futile, and he returned with a Silmaril in his hand to win Luthien as his bride. Perhaps Ibin is similarly blessed — but more likely, the Player-heroes encounter him in Moria as a prisoner of the Orcs, or as a half-starved madman lost in the darkness, clutching a cheap brass ring.

**OCCUPATION:** Treasure-hunter

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURE:** Reckless

## Dwarves of other houses

There are seven great houses of the Dwarves, each one descended from one of the seven fathers. Durin was the eldest, and his kinfolk, the Longbeards, settled Moria (and later Erebor and the Iron Hills). Some of the other houses dwelt in the east, and are said to have fallen 'under the Shadow'; another two houses dwelt further west, in the region of Beleriand beyond the Blue Mountains. Their cities of Nogrod and Belegost were shattered when Beleriad was drowned, and many migrated east and settled in Moria.

These Dwarves honoured Durin as the eldest of their race, and so they answered the call of King Thráin in the War of Dwarves and Orcs. They feared to enter Moria after the victory at the Dimrill Dale, for many of their kin had also fallen in battle. In years after, though, they grew dissatisfied, whispering *"where is the reward for our loyal service? We bled to avenge Thrór, even though it was his own foolishness that brought him to ruin on the doorstep of Moria. Now that Moria is abandoned and the Orcs diminished, why should we not take weregild for our fallen."* Others are even more jealous, saying *"the Longbeards have their new Kingdom under the Mountain, and their rivers run with gold — while we toil at the forge and live like beggars! If they are content with Erebor, then surely we may take Moria and its treasures as just recompense for our labours."*

Since the War of the Dwarves and Orcs, and especially since the Battle of Five Armies, a few Dwarves of the Blue Mountains have crept back into Moria, mostly via the western door. For now, they seek treasure, not a permanent presence in the halls…

### *Daza the Redhanded*

Daza comes from the line of the Dwarves of Nogrod. His hair is a fiery ruby-red that catches the eye from a great distance; his voice is louder than the war-horns of the Rohirrim, and he throws himself into the fray ahead of all others. As a young warrior, he fought at the Battle of Azanulbizar, and thought nothing of the cause. Afterwards, with a taste for battle, he became a mercenary, fighting for hire in the Southlands.

It was not until he was wounded by an Orc that Daza's thoughts turned once more to Khazad-dûm. The Orcs ambushed him on the Road; he slew most of them, but one of the wretches maimed his axe-hand and fled into the mountains. Unable to fight as he once did, Daza has become the herald of the Dwarves from the Blue Mountains who feel they have a rightful claim to the treasures of Moria, and plans to mount a large expedition there himself in years to come. His kinfolk dream of wealth, but Daza dreams of finding the Orc who wounded him and taking slow revenge.

Daza cuts a flamboyant figure with his rich clothes, jewelled axe, and elaborate oaths of vengeance. He doesn't hide his crippled hand, whose flesh was turned red by the Orc's poisoned blade. He is exceedingly well travelled, and peppers his speech with strange phrases borrowed from the Haradrim.

**OCCUPATION:** Herald

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Fierce, Vengeful

### ENCOUNTERING DAZA

Daza tends to make a loud entrance wherever he goes, appearing in a flash of thunder or with a war-cry. Player-heroes are more likely to meet him on a battlefield than in a council. In conversation, Daza speaks quickly, and chops through problems and disagreements with the most direct approach possible — he has little time for formalities or irrelevancies. He is a busy Dwarf, and he wants to get things done!

### DAZA AS A PATRON

Daza has no reverence for Moria — *"So what if the kings of old perished here? They're dead, we're alive, fetch the crowbar!"* His damaged hand means he takes no part in the adventuring himself, but he eagerly assigns missions to the Player-heroes, sending them after famous treasures in Moria.

Depending on the events of your campaign and the actions of the Player-heroes, Daza might succumb to greed and Dragon-sickness and become as bad as any Orc, or he might be redeemed by the sights and memories of Lost Khazad-dûm and become a heroic captain fighting to reclaim the city.

**FELLOWSHIP BONUS:** +1

**ADVANTAGE:** *Oaths of Vengeance*

Spend Fellowship to make an adversary's **PROTECTION** roll *Ill-favoured*.

## *Nál of the Iron Hills*

Many secrets of metallurgy and smith-craft were lost in the fall of Moria, and none feel this loss more keenly than Nál. She is an ancient Dwarf-woman, famed for her skill in the smithy. Although she descends from the Dwarves of Belegost, she served the lords of the Iron Hills for many centuries – she forged the axe that took the head of Azog, and the armour worn by Náin son of Grór, and many other wonders besides. It was she who made many of the famous toys of Dale – mechanical birds that sing, or little soldiers that march and fight.

But always, she knew that her mastery of the craft was lacking compared to the smiths of old. When she reached her 275th year, she declared that she intended to make a pilgrimage to the Halls of Durin and touch the works of the ancients with her own hands. While Dáin feared that such a long journey would be too much for such an old woman, he gave permission for Nál to depart, and commanded that she choose a few dwarven warriors to accompany her south.

Now it should be noted that Nál chose only a single Dwarf to travel with – her great-grand-nephew Naldin. When she reached the Dimrill Dale, she encamped in a sheltered dell and refused to leave. She declared that she wants to recover the lost secrets of the smiths of Moria before she dies, and the only place that can be done is here.

**OCCUPATION (NÁL):** Dwarf-smith

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Stern, Suspicious

**OCCUPATION (NALDIN):** Dwarf-valet

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURE:** True-hearted

### ENCOUNTERING NÁL

Neither Nál nor Naldin are experienced travellers, and their camp has been spotted by denizens of Dimrill Dale, like Mocker Crawe (see page XX). The Company might encounter the elder smith when they rescue her and her nephew from attacking Orcs — or maybe the Orcs seize one of the Dwarves and drag them off into the dark. Ironically, the Orcs are likely to put Naldin to work in the forge, while dismissing Nál as too old for anything but the stew-pot.

### NÁL AS A PATRON

Nál cannot venture into Moria herself, she's too old. Naldin dares not enter the Black Pit either — but neither can he gainsay his fearsome great-great-aunt what will doubtless be her dying wish. Therefore, the young Dwarf must cast around for some doughty adventurers who might help Nál find the lore she seeks!

**FELLOWSHIP BONUS:** +0

**ADVANTAGE:** *Dwarf-smithing*

By choosing the Meet Patron undertaking to visit Nál, each Player-hero in the Company may additionally upgrade a piece of war gear with a Reward of their choice. The Reward lasts only until the start of the next Fellowship Phase.

## Elves

Elves have a special dread of Moria. Even in the days of its glory, they did not like how deep the Dwarves delved, boring into the darkness of the mountains, but it was after its fall that their fears grew. The Elves of Lothlórien could sense that the Dwarves had awoken some nameless dread. Word of this new shadow stretched beyond Lórien, and even in Mirkwood they whispered of the dreadful Black Pit in the mountains, and it haunted their waking dreams. They blamed the greed and stubbornness of Durin's Folk for this new peril, and for many long centuries, no Elf dared set foot in Moria.

Since Sauron returned to his tower in Mordor and the Lidless Eye opened once more, however, the High Elves have thought of the dark road once more. The mighty Elf-lords of Lórien and Rivendell cannot travel easily, for if the Eye sees them, it can direct the minions of Mordor to hunt them down. They must travel by secret roads to hide from Sauron's sight, and no road is better hidden than the road through Moria. Some of those who dwell in Rivendell, too, dwelt in Hollin in Ages past, and recall fondly the glory days of Khazad-dûm — and the lesser Rings of Power they gave to the Dwarves. There are powers hidden in the dark places that may fortify the Elves against the coming darkness.

### *Haldir of Lórien*

***But there are some of us still who go abroad for the gathering of news and the watching of our enemies, and they speak the languages of other lands. I am one. Haldir is my name.***

**Haldir is one of the Elf-scouts appointed to watch the borders of Lothlórien, including the valley of the Silverlode. Player-heroes are unlikely to encounter Haldir unless they are Elves or Dúnedain; those who trespass in the Golden Wood are either turned around by the wood's enchantment or are never seen again. However, it is possible that a wounded or desperate traveller exiting from Moria might wander close to Lórien to be rescued by Haldir.**

**OCCUPATION:** Scout

**DISTINCTIVE FEATUREE:** Wary

## Middle Men and Hobbits

Short are the lives of Men, and swiftly does history pass into legend. A thousand years have passed since Moria fell, and Men have forgotten that Durin's Folk ever dwelt in the Misty Mountains. To them, Moria was always the Black Pit of the Orcs, a dreadful mine full of monsters from which no adventurer ever returned. There were vague tales of fabulous treasure-hoards down in the darkness, of piles of gems and gold and Mithril, lying forever out of reach of even the mightiest hero.

Then came the Battle of Five Armies, and the great defeat of the Orcs. Suddenly, whispers ran from Bree to the Fords of Isen, saying *'Moria is emptied of Orcs — the treasures can be ours!'* Heroes and burglars went in search of the rumoured hoards. Most of these intruders perished — but tales were told of a few who entered the Black Pit and survived.

In recent years, then, a few adventurers have braved the doors of Moria.

### THE THIEVES OF THARBAD

Tharbad commands the river-crossing of the Greyflood, and in years past had much commerce with the Dwarves of Moria. The wheat fields and farms east of the marshes fed the city for many centuries. After the Fall of Moria, some Dwarves fled to Tharbad, and sullenly plotted to reclaim their city from Durin's Bane. At other times, when the rains fell heavily upon the Misty Mountains, cunning folk from Tharbad would creep down to the river and watch the swollen flood-waters, for golden treasures would often be washed down from the drowned treasuries of Moria.

Tharbad is mostly abandoned now, too; flood and plague and the growing darkness of the Mountains drove its inhabitants north and south and west in search of safer homes. Only a few stubborn fools and thieves now remain, and all of them look with greedy eyes towards Moria. The folk of Tharbad remember more tales of old Moria than in other lands, and have closer friendship with the Dwarves. In recent years, the Bridge Inn in Tharbad has become a mustering post for those planning expeditions into the Black Pit. Would-be treasure hunters gather there to swap tales about Moria, and to talk about the fortunes they are sure to win in the depths. (Of course, the Thieves of Tharbad have learned that it is far safer to steal treasure from adventurers returning to Tharbad…)

### *Tharnow, Son of Gurnow*

**As described in *Ruins of the Lost Realm* (p. 16), the oafish but ambitious son of the Master of Tharbad seeks adventure and treasure, and thinks both could easily be found in Moria. Tharnow is foolish enough to just march to the**

West-gate, expecting to find piles of gold and jewels lying waiting for him. However, he is accompanied by cronies and brutes from his father's court, and those rogues have more cunning and a greater sense of self-preservation. They might waylay other explorers of Moria, or ally with the Orcs of Mordor (the Eye has already glanced at Tharbad, and seen how easily that rotten city might be turned to evil).

Should Tharnow perish in Moria, then his father's wrath would fall not on the Orcs, but would instead blame other adventures and treasure-hunters. If they are alive and his son is dead, then surely they are responsible!

### MEN OF WILDERLAND

Similarly, rumour of Moria has spread east. The Beornings, being a sensible and cautious folk, have shown little interest in entering a place called the Black Pit that is known to be full of Orcs — there's enough trouble at their borders without stirring up more. The forefathers of the Rohirrim brought tales south of a once-great kingdom under the mountains now fallen into shadow, and say that only a fool would brave the darkness. In Dale, though, brave young knights raised on tales of their sires' heroism in the Battle of Five Armies talk of marching south, spears flashing in the summer sun, and winning glory on the fields of the Dimrill Dale. If one Dwarf-hold can be reclaimed, why not another?

### DUNLENDINGS

The wild men of Dunland have many tales of the Black Pit, none of them pleasant. Even before the coming of Durin's Bane, the ancestors of the Dunlendings quarrelled with the Dwarves and their allies. For many centuries, no Man of Dunland ever trespassed close to the doors of Durin.

In recent years, however, word has come to the hill-tribes that a certain Wizard desires any books, scrolls, moulds, tools or jewels — especially "rings" from the Black Pit. Saruman's quest for Ring-lore has brought him to the gates of Moria, in search of whatever remains of the lost secrets of the smiths of Eregion.

## *Arcinyas the Healer*

Saruman the White has many agents in Dunland and Wilderland; Arcinyas is one of his most reliable, although the mortal man is now exceedingly old and frail, so his years of service are coming to an end. Arcinyas is a scholar, and presents himself as a healer and a seeker after knowledge. If Saruman becomes aware that there are explorers active in Moria, he would approach them and offer his services as a healer. Once he has their trust, he invites them to visit his master at Isengard.

And should Arcinyas fail, or if these explorers reject Saruman's entreaties to find the lost Ring-lore — then Saruman also commands the loyalty of Dunlending cut-throats. These rogues might not be any good at finding secrets in Moria, but there are other uses for such tools.

Saruman as a Patron and his servants are described in *Ruins of the Lost Realm*, starting from page 40.

### THE WOODMEN

The Woodmen know little of Moria; for them it is but a distant shadow from the dim past, and they have more pressing concerns. However, one branch of the Woodmen crossed the River and established another settlement in the foothills north of the Gladden Fields, where they mine for copper and tin. These Mountain-folk have explored the Misty Mountains to the south, and one clan of them has built a fastness in the hills overlooking the West Nether Vales. This settlement, Tarloch's Hall (see page XX) is home to doughty hill-men and shepherds, who do not know that the ancient halls of Durin lie far beneath their feet.

However, Tarloch's Hall holds a secret. Long ago, a shepherd found what she thought to be an ancient barrow on a hillside, and it has become the custom of Tarloch's folk that youths must prove their courage by entering the barrow and returning with some token or treasure. The Woodmen draw no distinction between the various fallen kingdoms of elder days: Khazad-dûm, Hollin, Númenor, all their towers and roads and walls, all are the ancient work of giants.

### THE RIDERS OF ROHAN

The forefathers of the forefathers of the Rohirrim traded with the Dwarves, but all that is forgotten, save in stories of magic smiths under the mountains who forged weapons for heroes. The Eorlings know nothing of Moria, save vague stories about a dungeon where the enchantress of the Golden Wood imprisons those foolish enough to trespass in her land.

## Heirs to the Men of the West

Moria and Númenor are both names out of the past that have become legend, echoes of the elder days when great deeds were done. The Men of the West recall something of what Moria once was, in days before the fall, just as they recall vanished Númenor.

### RANGERS OF THE NORTH

Tales are told in the Hall of Fire of Moria at its height, for Elves yet dwell in Rivendell who remember the days of glory. There are secrets remembered in the house of Elrond that even the Dwarves have forgotten. That said, the Rangers know better than to brave the darkness under the mountains without cause. Rangers are more likely to prevent unwise expeditions into Moria than join them.

But now that Sauron has returned, the Orcs of the Misty Mountains must be watched closely. The Doors of Durin are not so far from the Angle where the remnants of the Dúnedain dwell, and the ancient Enemy would gladly use the strength of Moria to crush the descendents of Isildur.

### MEN OF GONDOR

Gondor has enough trouble without stirring up sleeping evils. To the folk of Minas Tirith, Moria is a memory of horror, another kingdom to be added to the litany of those destroyed by the Shadow. For all its impenetrable fortifications, Moria fell; the Tower of Guard must hope that the courage of Men endures where even steel and stone failed.

# A Name of Ill-Omen

*"The name of Moria is black."*

A thousand years have passed since the fall of Khazad-dûm. More than thirty generations of mortal Men, long enough for memory to pass into story, story to become legend, and legend to be forgotten entirely. Even among the Dwarves, a full ten kings of Durin's line have lived and died without setting foot in the King's Hall. Of living beings, only the Elves remember the Wonder of the Northern World in all its lamp-lit glory.

The Shire was founded some three hundred years prior to the fall of Moria, and there was little trade between the two (records preserved in the Great Smial of Tookland note that Dwarven stonemasons were employed in the construction of that ancient Hobbit-hall). Most Hobbit-tales of Khazad-dûm are much, much older. Both the Harfoot and Stoor-Hobbits dwelt at times near Moria, and the Harfoot custom of living in burrows may have been inspired by underground Dwarven cities.

## RUMOURS

Should the Player-heroes seek out tales of Moria, then call for a **LORE** roll. If the roll fails, give the players a False Rumour. On a success, give them a Genuine Rumour; if the roll produces a single ᚢ, roll on the *Famous Landmarks table* using 1 Success die instead. With two or more ᚢ, roll on the *Famous Landmarks table* as above, and additionally roll a Feat die on the *Obscure Landmarks table*. If the characters receive a rumour about a specific landmark, use the Rumour entry provided for that landmark in *Chapter 5*.

### FALSE RUMOURS (FAILED LORE ROLL)

Nonsense and lies about Moria.

**ROLL A FEAT DIE**

| | |
|---|---|
| 👁 | Someone overhears the conversation, and assumes the heroes have recently returned from Moria and are therefore rich with treasure. The Company is robbed or attacked that night. |
| 1 | It's bad luck to speak of that place. |
| 2 | Giants dwell in the Misty Mountains, and their graves lie under the mountain. Let them sleep there until the world's ending. |
| 3 | Moria? I've heard of Moria. It's away down south. Full of fiery mountains and terrible things, they say. |
| 4 | I've heard tell of Moria – the Dwarves got driven out by a dragon, they say, but now the dragon's dead and the Dwarves have returned, and the rivers run with gold. |
| 5 | There's a maze under the mountain. If you stray into it, you'll be lost forever. |
| 6 | Moria? It's a roost of Orcs and Goblins. There's nothing there but evil and Orcs. |
| 7 | The mountains are full of gold and silver if you know where to dig. Great piles of jewels too – the treasures of the Dwarves of old. All cursed, of course – I wouldn't take any of it. |
| 8 | Moria? It's just a tale the Dwarves made up. A vision from eating too many cave-mushrooms. |
| 9 | According to the tales the Dwarves tell, there's a door into Moria near the source of the Glanduin. Just follow the river, and you'll find it. |
| 10 | It was poison and plague that brought ruin to the Dwarves. The air's foul down there – one breath will kill you. |
| ᚠ | Someone overhears the conversation and the mention of Moria – someone like a prospective patron or ally. |

### GENUINE RUMOUR (SUCCESSFUL LORE ROLL)

Stories and faded memories of Moria.

**ROLL A FEAT DIE**

| | |
|---|---|
| 👁 | King Dain forbids the Dwarves to return to the city of the ancestors. Only a fool – or a grave-robbing thief – would defy the king's command! |
| 1 | You can often find Dwarven pilgrims near the Stair Falls east of Moria – they go there to gaze upon the mountains of their ancestors. |
| 2 | It's dangerous to be in the Dimrill Dale at night – the Orcs cannot abide sunlight, but as soon as the sun sets, they can go abroad. |
| 3 | Moria has long since been looted by Orcs – if any of the treasures of the Dwarves survive, they must be well-hidden indeed. |
| 4 | I've heard tales of Goblins kidnapping travellers in the mountains and dragging them down into their caves to labour in the mines. |
| 5 | The Dwarves are doughty warriors – no doubt they fought to the bitter end when their city was overrun. 'tis strange that there are no tales of the last stand of the king. |
| 6 | Beware the birds of the Dimrill Dale – they've got a taste for corpse-meat. |
| 7 | I once heard a tale of the spirit of Caradhras – she was a beautiful woman, with red lips, but her kiss was the icy wind of winter. If you encounter her, beware! |
| 8 | The Dwarves built in the heights as well as underneath the mountain. Climb, and you may find traces of those lost halls! |
| 9 | Don't drink any water from the wells and streams in Moria! Orcs have poisoned them all! |
| 10 | Tread lightly! Do not disturb the silence and the dark. You are not alone down there! |
| ᚠ | Someone overhears the conversation and the mention of Moria – someone like a prospective patron or ally. |

### FAMOUS LANDMARKS (A SINGLE ᛉ ICON ON THE LORE ROLL)

| ROLL A SUCCESS DIE | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The First Hall (page XX) |
| 2 | The Second Hall and Durin's Bridge (page XX) |
| 3 | The Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard (page XX) |
| 4 | The King's Hall (page XX) |
| 5 | The Redhorn Gate (page XX) |
| 6 | Doors of Durin (page XX) |

### OBSCURE LANDMARKS (TWO OR MORE ᛉ ICONS ON THE LORE ROLL)

| ROLL A FEAT DIE | |
|---|---|
| ᚛ | Roll again, but the person telling the rumour is secretly an enemy of the Player-heroes — possibly trying to lure them into a trap. Reroll additional ᚛ or ᚠ. |
| 1 | The Mounds of Azanulbizar (page XX) |
| 2 | The Chamber of Mazarbul (page XX) |
| 3 | The Vault of Uruktharbun (page XX) |
| 4 | The Fortress of Malech (page XX) |
| 5 | The Mountain Galleries (page XX) |
| 6 | The Halls of the Roadwarden (page XX) |
| 7 | The Great West Cave (page XX) |
| 8 | The Imperishable Hall (page XX) |
| 9 | The Armouries of the Third Deep (page XX) |
| 10 | The Ledge of Woe (page XX) |
| ᚠ | The heroes encounter someone who has knowledge of a Hidden Landmark, like Tarloch's Hall for example. |

# RUNNING MORIA

*"Moria! Moria! Wonder of the Northern world! Too deep we delved there, and woke the nameless fear. Long have its vast mansions lain empty since the children of Durin fled."*

Moria is not a fortress of the Enemy, like Barad-Dur or Minas Morgul. It is not a dungeon brimming with traps and monsters — there are traps and monsters here, but for the most part Moria is *empty*. It is a ruined city, endless and bleak, the air heavy with melancholic gloom. Exploring Moria is not a madcap adventure that bounces from one weird encounter to another; for the most part, it is a cold march through a dark place, silent and lonely as a grave. *Fear* and *gloom* should be the campaign's dominant moods.

The challenge for the Loremaster, then, is cultivating that mood without the game becoming dull or repetitive. Endlessly describing empty rooms filled with dust and rubble quickly bores any player; filling the game with combat encounters and hazards makes Moria seem much too crowded.

Instead, for each expedition into Moria, choose a theme and develop that in the course of play through your descriptions and encounters — aim for an emotional impression of the journey instead of a rote litany of regions explored. In fact, we recommend picking two of the themes below, one from each category. One category focusses on the city as it was, on the wonders of Khazad-dûm, the other on the perils of the present ruin. Each theme includes suggestions to build scenes and Journey Events around.

## Themes of Wonder

If Moria is nothing but Orcs and darkness, the tragedy is lost. Moria must have its faded grandeur and shattered glory, too — the Player-heroes must *want* to return, just one more time, to see the halls of Durin again.

### VAST AND INTRICATE BEYOND IMAGINATION

Moria is huge and ancient; for seven thousand years the Dwarves laboured here, building and expanding their city. This theme emphasises Moria's sheer size and complexity, impressing on players the grandeur and sophistication of the past compared to the fallen and diminished present.

- Use the Dwarven practice of numbering rather than naming to convey the city's size; if this is the Twenty-First Hall, and it is on the Seventh Level, then there are tens more halls of equal or greater importance, and six or more other levels of equal size. Every extant building in Eriador east of the Tower Hills — from the towns of the Shire, to Bree and its smaller villages, to the House of Elrond Half-elven — could be swallowed up in a corner of just one of those levels and hardly be noticed.
- Talk about the cunning engineering of the city — its infrastructure of roads, ramps, stairs and elevators, its airshafts, drains and pumps, its gates, cisterns and lamps.
- Have the Company encounter some great civic wonder, some luxury that only a highly advanced culture could afford. A vast library, perhaps, or a theatre, or a gallery of the arts, or a palace of great kings. All ruined and faded now, of course, but echoes of that ornate glory are still visible.
- When the Company camps for the night, one of the Player-heroes dreams of being alive in the city's heyday. Ask them to describe that dream.

*In the pale ray of the wizard's staff, Frodo caught glimpses of stairs and arches, and of other passages and tunnels, sloping up or running steeply down, or opening blankly on either side. It was bewildering beyond hope of remembering.*

### THE DARK AND SECRET WAY

Moria was a hidden kingdom, buried beneath the mountains. There are innumerable secrets to be uncovered here, as travellers can pass unseen along these dark roads. Think of the Player-heroes as explorers or archaeologists, entering a tomb that has been undisturbed for centuries. The flickering light of their torches illuminates wonderful things, treasures of the ancient world.

- Have the Company come upon unexpected but stunning vistas — a secret window that looks out over the mountains, a bridge spanning a yawning cavern, a shaft that plunges into the depths of the earth, or a chamber still lit by ancient lamps of glowing crystal.
- Include secret or magical doors and hidden passages; doorways that appear only when a Dwarf touches them, or chambers that have lain concealed for a thousand years.
- Have the Company espy or even eavesdrop upon their foes; maybe they overhear Orcs talking in an adjoining room, or hear voices echoing up some shaft. Alternatively, maybe the Company can sneak by their foes by slipping down a secret passageway or along an unseen walkway.

*Dwarf-doors are not made to be seen when shut. They are invisible, and their own makers cannot find them or open them, if their secret is forgotten.*

### THE ANCIENT WORK OF GIANTS

This theme focusses on the sheer scale of the works within Moria — this was a city of epic, heroic proportions, a city built by Dwarves with the spirits of giants. The Player-heroes and their foes are like furtive mice, scratching and sneaking in the corners of a great house. To reinforce this theme:

- Have the Company pass over or around gigantic structures — titanic statues, like the twin sentinels of the Argonath, aqueducts like raging rivers, forges where a legion of smiths might labour all at once.
- Hint at lost secrets of the Dwarves — just as Orthanc was made of stone without joint or mortar, maybe the ancient folk of Moria learned to shape stone without mason's chisel, or could make living statues that walked and laboured on their behalf — now fallen into rubble.
- Contrast the geometric perfection and tremendous scale of the works of old, with the paltry scrapings of the Orcs and the slow intrusion of nature. A vast hall might have a few weeds growing in one corner, where the ceiling has cracked letting the sunlight in. As the Company approach, they realise the 'weeds' are actually huge rowan trees, centuries old, grown from seeds that fell here and took root among the broken stones.

*For a second they saw a vast roof far above their heads upheld by many mighty pillars hewn of stone.*

### THE LAND WHERE OUR FATHERS WORKED OF OLD

Khazad-dûm is forever the home of the Longbeard Dwarves in Middle-earth, no matter how far they roam or whatever other halls and fortresses they make. Here it was that Durin dwelt since the Elder Days, and here it was that the Dwarven clans had their great houses and secret shrines. This theme is best when you have got one or more Dwarves among the Player-heroes, as it revolves around reminding them of their spiritual and cultural connection to Moria.

- While exploring the ruins, one of the Player-heroes finds an ancient family seal, or a statue of one of their ancestors.
- Run a flashback scene where one of the Dwarven Player-heroes recalls a family legend about how their forefathers escaped from the city as it fell.
- A Player-hero might recover Hope by visiting their family's ancient stronghold. Better yet, have a Player-hero taking a new Reward or finding a Famous Weapon discover an ancestral blade in the ruins!

*'I will go and look on the halls of Durin, whatever may wait there!'*

### PILES OF GOLD AND JEWELS

Moria has endured a thousand years of looting — but the Dwarves worked here for seven thousand years, and if anyone knows how to hide their treasure, it is Durin's folk. The easy pickings may be long gone, but there are still hoards here, locked away beyond the reach of greedy Orcs.

- Even a small treasure can be meaningful. Finding a few coins of little worth amid the fallen stones betokens greater rewards in future — if the Orcs did not find these coins, then what else did they miss?
- The Dwarves did not flee Moria immediately when Durin's Bane awoke; it took them nearly two years before completely abandoning the city. There was not enough time to take all the treasures of the Dwarrowdelf — but there was time to hide them, concealing them behind Dwarf-doors and cunning puzzles. The clues for recovering a particular treasure might be handed down in the form of a rhyme of lore or family secret.
- If Moria was looted by the Orcs — then the Orcs have the gold. Each of the chieftains of the Orc-tribes — Malech, Gorgol, Thu — commands a treasury to rival the hoard of Smaug. Slay the Orcs and take back the gold!

*'Its worth was greater than the value of the whole Shire and everything in it.'*

### THE CITY RECLAIMED

This theme looks to the future of Moria, and explores the promise that the city can be rebuilt. Focus on laying the foundations for an eventual return — as Dáin prophesied, the Dwarves will only return successfully to Khazad-dûm after the world has changed.

- Have the Company make some discovery within Moria that can be built upon in future expeditions — they might find a hitherto-unknown route in or out, or a safe source of drinking water, or a sanctuary within the ruin.
- Give the Player-heroes the opportunity to fix something. This can be as small as barricading a door so the Company have a secure room to make camp in, or as significant as repairing one of the broken wonders of the city.
- While camping, one of the Company finds some Dwarf-made item that was unfinished when the city was abandoned. A sword-blade without a hilt, wooden barrel-staves without a hoop, a statue half-carved. The Player-heroes can take up the dropped tools and complete the work. The Dwarves believe they are destined to restore all creation to rightness and beauty when evil is finally defeated, so a Dwarf's work is never done in Arda Marred.

*For a while we had news and it seemed good: messages reported that Moria had been entered and a great work begun there.*

## Themes of Sorrow and Fear

A theme of wonder reminds the Company of the lost glories of Moria, and shows them it is more than a black pit filled with Orcs. Themes of Sorrow and Fear, however, remind them they are in grave danger. Vary the theme for each excursion into Moria (or each leg of a long journey) so the feeling of peril changes.

The nature of the danger may change depending on the events of the game; do not stick to a theme if it is overtaken by events. A series of really unlucky rolls can change the tale from a journey in the Long and Lonely Dark to a desperate flight from Horrors Beyond Knowledge.

### THE LONG AND LONELY DARK

To enter Moria is to vanish from the sight of the world, and mayhaps perish far from sunlight, never to be found again. Darkness lies heavily upon these halls.

- Emphasise the darkness and the importance of light. If the Company do not have a Wizard or a magical source of light, then they must rely on a dwindling supply of torches or the occasional glimpse of light from shafts. Describe textures, smells and sounds instead of visual impressions. Play on their fears — maybe they glimpse shifting shadows that could be lurking foes, or just a trick of the light.
- Require the Company to describe their camping arrangements, and then describe how the gloom of Moria makes these unpleasant. If the Player-heroes carry bedrolls, then note how the chill of the stone floor makes them cold as graves. Foul water drips from above; every resting place is grim and uncomfortable.
- Play with the Player-heroes' sense of time. They have no way to tell the hour of the day without seeing the sun, or of knowing how long they have been wandering down here — especially if they are lost. You might even tell individual players different things depending on their characters' Shadow ratings — those closer to being Miserable might perceive the length of the journey differently…

*All about them hung the darkness, hollow and immense…*

### ARDA MARRED

Moria has lain under a shadow for more than a thousand years, and all that was once good and beautiful is now corrupted. This theme focusses on the decay and rot of the city.

- Emphasise the crumbling state of the city — everything is broken and falling apart. Talk about collapsed ceilings, blocked passageways, weed-choked shafts. Even structures that appear at first glance to be strong and stable might crumble away; have attacking Orcs smash through a wall instead of approaching down a passageway.
- The Goblins have perverted and adapted the Dwarven machinery to their own cruel ends. The Company encounters Goblin-bombs and other traps in lieu of other hazards, all made from Dwarven works of old.
- The Company comes upon some fabled treasure of the Dwarves — a crystal lamp, a delicate mosaic, a famous statue — only to find it defiled and ruined for no reason other than petty Orcish vandalism.

*'I have looked on Moria, and it is very great, but it has become dark and dreadful, and we have found no sign of my kindred.'*

### TOIL AND HUNGER

Moria was not built in a day; nor can it be reclaimed in a single day, nor even a single year. It will take many years, not to mention the coming of a power other than that of Durin's Folk, before Moria is theirs again. Furthermore, Moria is far from civilised lands. In the west, the closest Haven is the grim town of Tharbad; to the east, travellers must trek all the way back up the Anduin to the Beorning-land before they meet a friendly face. Unless, of course, the Player-heroes have befriended the folk of Swanfleet in the west, or Lothlórien in the east, both of which are much closer to its gates. There's also Tarloch's Hall on the far side of Caradhras (see page XX).

- There is no hunting in Moria. It is assumed that the Player-heroes carry enough food for their planned expedition underground, but if they are lost, delayed or suffer some other misfortune, they may face the pangs of hunger and thirst — and when they return to the surface, they will need to replenish their supplies promptly.
- Similarly, keep reminding the Company of their light sources. They are assumed to have a stock of torches or other lights, but torches mean smoke and heat, candles mean dripping wax and flickering flames, and magic light — well, magic light is all well and good, but draws plenty of attention.
- Remind them of their lack of other supplies, too. Using rope to climb down a chasm is all well and good, but — as Sam observed — how do you get the rope back when you are done with it?

*'Go carefully with the water, too! There are many streams and wells in the Mines, but they should not be touched.'*

### THE TRIUMPH OF THE ENEMY

Moria is firmly in the hands of the Orcs and other creatures of the Enemy. Indeed, their hold is so secure here that their chief enemy is one another — there is no hope of the Dwarves recovering the city until the world changes. The Player-heroes may be able to accomplish some good, but only as thieves — not avenging heroes.

- Emphasise the sheer number of Orcs here. Slay one, and three more will emerge from noisome holes. Have the Orcs be much more concerned with their own feuds and intrigues than the threat of outsiders.
- Show the Player-heroes that the Orcs are not just lurking and looting — they are taking slaves, working the mines, and preparing for the coming War. As Sauron's dreadful gaze moves across the land, he inspires his creatures to make ready for his triumph over the West.

*'If beggars do not wait at the door, but sneak in to try thieving, that is what we do to them. If any of your people poke their foul beards in here again, they will fare the same. Go and tell them so!'*

### THERE IS NO SAFE PLACE

There are truly safe places in Moria, but they are few and secret. For the most part, there is nowhere the Company can rest where they will be completely secure. Always mention "something" to sow doubt in the minds of the players. For example, the Fellowship made camp in a guard-room with an uncapped well, and Pippin feared something might crawl out of it as they slept. To engender similar discomfort, mention:

- Cracks, air-shafts, cave mouths, doors locked from the far side, trapdoors, suspected secret passages, unnoticed side entrances — never let the Player-heroes feel wholly in command of their surroundings
- Strange noises and smells — dripping or flowing water, the groaning of the mountains, distant tapping or drumming.
- Ask the Player-heroes to describe their own speculations or worries in-character, especially if they are close to being Miserable

*They were more than weary, and yet there seemed no comfort in the thought of halting anywhere.*

### HORRORS BEYOND KNOWLEDGE

Few words Tolkien wrote are as mysterious as Gandalf's description of his experiences in the Underworld. *"We fought far under the living earth, where time is not counted. Ever he clutched me, and ever I hewed him, 'till at last he fled into dark tunnels. They were not made by Durin's folk, Gimli son of Glóin. Far far below the deepest delvings of the Dwarves, the world is gnawed by nameless things. Even Sauron knows them not. They are older than he."* For all its terror, even the Balrog has its place in the cosmology of Middle-earth, as a servitor spirit of Morgoth. Gandalf's words hint at other powers, nameless and unknown.

- Hint at things the Company will never learn the truth about. They might hear some creature crawling through the tunnels, its scaly hide rasping against the stone. They might glimpse purple light in the distance, but never discover its source. They might find a cryptic message scrawled on a wall, but never learn its meaning. The mysteries of Moria haunt the reader; answers are quickly accepted and do not linger.

*'Something has crept, or has been driven out of dark waters under the mountains.'*

CHAPTER 3

# JOURNEYS IN THE DARK

*Boromir muttered under his breath, but the echoing stone magnified the sound to a hoarse whisper that all could hear: 'In the deep places of the world! And thither we are going against my wish. Who will lead us now in this deadly dark?'*

The present chapter introduces special rules for travelling in Moria, adapted from the normal Journey rules for *The One Ring*.

The map of Moria included with this supplement can be used by the Loremaster as an actual artefact that the Player-heroes may find in their adventuring, or the sum of the knowledge a Company of experienced adventurers may have gathered from different sources.

All the locations featured on the map can be chosen as the destination of a Company entering Moria, using the game mechanics described in the *Into the Long Dark* section below. Yet, not every site within Moria is shown on the map — finding other, more obscure landmarks is a different endeavour, covered by the *Seeking and Finding* section on page XX.

# Into the Long Dark

*There were not only many roads to choose from, there were also in many places holes and pitfalls, and dark wells beside the path in which their passing feet echoed.*

When the Company enters Moria with the intention of reaching a known location (a Landmark shown on the map, for example), or to travel through the ruins to exit the opposite way, then the Loremaster must apply the following adaptation of the Journey rules.

> The following rules require the Moria map, and collaboration between the Loremaster and the players to determine what happens along the way.

## The Company Underground

When the Company journeys underground, its members must assume travelling roles normally, with the exception of the *Hunter*. While it is assumed that in the course of a normal journey, Hunters in the Company augment and replenish whatever supplies they have brought with them with the bounty of the Wild, no such opportunities exist in Moria.

> *Hunters* are instead replaced by *Delvers*, whose function is to ensure the safety of the marching Company, inspecting tunnels, monitoring environmental conditions, and in general mitigating risks connected to the structures of an underground complex. Their defining Skill is CRAFT.

As usual, the travelling Company must cover all available roles — in this case, the roles of *Guide*, *Delvers*, *Look-outs* and *Scouts*.

> Finally, ponies and other beasts of burden will not accompany a Company into the dark unless they are truly exceptional animals (like a Bree-pony) or unless a Player-hero achieves a Magical success on an ENHEARTEN roll.

## SPARE FOOD AND WATER-SKINS

Unable to hunt in Moria, the members of a Company are assumed to carry enough food and water to sustain them for the length of their subterranean explorations.

If the Loremaster and players are interested in dwelling upon this sort of minutiae, all Player-heroes must raise their Load score by 4 points, to represent the added burden of carrying extra food and water.

## MANY STREAMS AND WELLS

*"There are many streams and wells in the Mines, but they should not be touched."*

Gandalf warned that the Company should avoid drinking from the waters of Moria — but why? Pick one of the following perils, or roll on the *Peril Table* below for each source of water. (Note that the table includes a chance that the Company happen upon drinkable water!)

If the Player-heroes refill and open the High Cistern (see page XX), then the waters in the eastern portion of Moria become drinkable again.

### PERIL TABLE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | WATER |
|---|---|
| | The water is drinkable, but some foe lurks here — Orcs lying in wait, or a Nameless Thing. |
| 1–2 | Malice of Durin's Bane |
| 3–4 | Poisoned by the Mines |
| 5–6 | Bitter Water |
| 7–8 | Orc-Filth |
| 9–10 | Icy Cold |
|  | Pure, drinkable water |

**ORC-FILTH:** Orcs have befouled the waters of Moria. Orcs must eat and drink like other living things, so they have not poisoned all the wells and springs — but they know which are safe to drink from, and keep guard over them. A Player-hero who drinks suffers a moderate Endurance loss due to poison.

**BITTER WATER:** The waters that filter down to the city below pass through many layers of stone, and are almost indescribably bitter. To stomach this water, a Player-hero must pass a successful VALOUR test; if they fail, they cannot push themselves to drink.

**ICY COLD:** The waters of Moria wash down from the heights of the mountains, and are fed by the snows. The water is icy cold, but drinkable. The true danger, though, is that this source of water only exists in the late spring and summer; for more than half the year, there is not enough snow melt to fill the aqueducts.

**POISONED BY THE MINES:** The Dwarves dug deep in search of Mithril; the tailings from the mine have poisoned many of the springs and wells. They marked the tainted water sources, but the passing years and Orc-mischief have erased the warning signs. Consulting ancient records can identify safe springs; a Player-hero drinking from a tainted source in the Deeps, suffers a severe Endurance loss due to poison.

**MALICE OF DURIN'S BANE:** The malign influence of the Balrog suffuses the waters of Moria. Anyone who drinks from the waters here tastes the tears of all the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm who wept as Durin's Bane laid waste to their kingdom, gaining 2 points of Shadow (Sorcery). Those who fail the Shadow test or are miserable suffer from hallucinations akin to Moria-madness (see page XX).

## Journey Sequence

The sequence used to resolve an underground Journey is the usual:

1. Set Journey Path
2. Make Marching Tests
3. Ending the Journey

### 1 SET JOURNEY PATH

Using the Moria map, the Company shows the Loremaster where they are headed. The Loremaster then uses a ruler to measure the distance separating the Company from their destination, converting the measurement into miles using the scale shown on the map.

When measuring the distance that the Company must cover, the Loremaster must consider that the road in Moria may wind much — to accommodate for this, the final distance should always be rounded up, or even augmented by as much as 50%. If the chosen destination requires the Company to change levels often, climbing up or down, then the Loremaster may even double the measured distance.

> For ease of reference, the Loremaster may draw a winding line on a copy of the journey log (see *The One Ring*, page XX), considering each hex to correspond to 2 miles.

The path drawn on the journey log must not necessarily conform to the itinerary as suggested by the Moria map — the only requirement is that the number of hexes corresponds to the distance to cover.

### 2 MAKE MARCHING TESTS

The occurrence of journey events is resolved as usual, with the Guide of the Company making Marching Tests, rolling **TRAVEL**. The roll *loses (1d)* if the Company is in the Deeps or in the Mines of Moria regions.

As soon as the Company leaves, the Guide makes a first Marching Test, and counts a number of miles along the journey path based on the outcome of the **TRAVEL** roll:

- If the **TRAVEL** roll was a failure, the Company barely makes any progress, advancing by 2 miles on the journey path. Then, an event occurs.
- If the **TRAVEL** roll was a success, the Guide has struck a good path and the Company advances 6 miles, plus 2 additional miles for each Success icon. Then, an event occurs.

To determine the precise nature and consequences of an event, proceed to Event Resolution (see page XX).

Once the event has been resolved, the Guide must make a new Marching Test to see how many miles the Company covers before something else happens along the journey path.

### 3 ENDING THE JOURNEY

The Company reaches its intended destination once a Marching Test result matches or exceeds the number of miles left between the Company's current position and their point of arrival.

When this happens, all Player-heroes calculate their Fatigue normally, using the rules on page 111 of *The One Ring*. If necessary, the length of the journey in days can be calculated by dividing the total distance in miles by 10.

If the members of a Company are in need of haste, as the Fellowship of the Ring was when they passed through Moria, they can press themselves and march for more hours each day than they would otherwise dare.

> If the Company undertakes a forced march, divide the total distance by 20 instead of by 10, but each Player-hero accumulates 1 additional point of Fatigue for each day of forced march.

## EVENT RESOLUTION

Journey events in Moria are determined as usual, rolling a Success die on the *Event Target* table below to select a target Player-hero, and by rolling a Feat die on the *Moria Journey Events* table.

**EVENT TARGET**

| SUCCESS DIE ROLL | TARGET | SKILLS |
|---|---|---|
| 1–2 | Scouts | EXPLORE |
| 3–4 | Look-outs | AWARENESS |
| 5–6 | Delvers | CRAFT |

**MORIA JOURNEY EVENTS**

| FEAT DIE ROLL | EVENT | CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL | FATIGUE POINTS GAINED |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eye | Deadly Dark | If the roll fails, the target is Wounded, and the Loremaster raises the Eye Awareness of the Company by 1. | 3 |
| 1–2 | The Long Dark of Moria | If the roll fails, everyone in the Company gains 2 Shadow points (Dread). | 2 |
| 3–5 | Watchful Eyes | If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread), and the Loremaster raises the Eye Awareness of the Company by 1. | 2 |
| 6–9 | Endlessly Branching Stairs and Passages | If the roll fails, add 1 day to the length of the journey, and the target gains 1 additional Fatigue. In addition, regardless of whether the roll is successful or not, roll on the Random Chamber Generator (page XX). | 2 |
| 10 | The Right Way | If the roll succeeds, reduce the length of the journey by 1 day. | 1 |
| ᚠ | Dread and Wonder of Moria | If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread). If the roll succeeds, everyone in the Company regains 1 Hope instead. | – |

## Seeking and Finding

The following modifications to the underground journey rules can be used when the Player-heroes venture into Moria in search of a place they've heard about but lack precise information concerning its location (for example, a place they have discovered using the *Gather Rumours* undertaking).

The minimum requirement is to know the approximate area where the Landmark is supposed to be found.

To find such a place, the Company must use the normal rules for underground journeys to reach the approximate region. Once there, the Company must make a Seeking Test, to pinpoint the precise location and reach it.

A Seeking Test is made rolling **SCAN**, modified by the Landmark's Renown (see page XX): if the Landmark is *Famous*, the roll is resolved normally; if the Landmark is *Obscure*, the roll *loses (1d)*; if the Landmark is *Hidden*, it can be found only with a Magical success (if the Company has found enough clues pointing to the Landmark, this one may be considered *Obscure* for the sake of the Seeking Test).

- If the Test is successful, the Player-heroes either find the Landmark sought — or, if the gathered rumours were false in the first place, they confirm that it is not nearby.
- If the Test fails, the Company does not find the Landmark and must roll once on the *Moria Journey Events* table.

# Describing Moria

*Nothing more was heard for several minutes; but then there came out of the depths faint knocks: tom-tap, tap-tom. They stopped, and when the echoes had died away, they were repeated: tap-tom, tom-tap, tom. They sounded disquietingly like signals of some sort; but after a while the knocking died away and was not heard again.*

Adding disconcerting details when describing a journey through Moria is a wonderful trick for the Loremaster, making the Player-heroes apprehensive and fearful. It is especially effective if you tie these portents to the roll of an Eye and the increase in Eye Awareness.

Some options to drop into your Adventures follow:

**GROANING OF THE MOUNTAINS:** The walls around the Company creak and dust falls as the mountain shifts and settles. A distant groan, so deep they feel it in their bones rather than hearing it, echoes through the room.

**FOOTSTEPS:** The sound of footsteps seems to follow the Player-heroes, *almost* but not quite matching the pattern of their own footfalls — as if someone is stalking them. After a few minutes, the other footsteps fall silent.

**SCRAPING:** The Company hear scraping, as if someone is scratching at a stone with a blade or chisel. The sound seems to come from the far side of a wall or ceiling nearby, but there is no way to reach that spot without smashing through the stone wall.

**DARK DREAMS:** Everyone shares the same awful nightmare of running through the dark halls of Moria, pursued by a figure of smoke and fire.

**WHISPERS:** One of the Player-heroes hears a whispering voice, urging them to turn from the path and walk into the darkness. They cannot make out individual words, just their name and the strong impression that they are being invited onwards.

**SPLASHING:** In the distance can be heard the sound of splashing water and a heavy, wet thump, as if something large had dragged itself out of a pool to stumble along the shore.

**SCRATCHES:** Someone has scratched marks on the wall, scrawling what seems to be a message in an unknown language. The marks might be crude Dwarf-runes, or a mockery of such. The one symbol that is clearly readable is an arrow, pointing off the path.

**UNEXPECTED SKELETON:** The company comes upon a skeleton (Dwarf or Man), crouched against a door as if the poor creature squandered the last of its strength trying to push the portal open. The skeleton has some trait or broken piece of gear that is oddly reminiscent of one of the Player-heroes. For example, if one of them bears their ancestral sword as their most memorable signifier, then there is a blunt and rusted sword of similar design next to the skeleton.

**STRANGE WIND:** A wind — hot and foul, or bitterly cold — blows through the room, stirring up the dust and possibly snuffing the Company's torches. The wind feels unnatural so deep underground.

**BROKEN TOOLS:** On the ground, the Company finds the remains of a set of smith's tools — hammers, tongs, rasps and files — all deliberately smashed. There is a sense of *malice*, of a deliberate rejection of craft.

**DISTANT MACHINERY:** The sound of huge wheels, creaking and grinding into life, echoes through the halls in the distance. Chains rattle; heavy weights are dragged. The machinery screeches and groans, then ceases with a sudden thump, as if something has collapsed.

**SMOKE AND HEAT:** While the Player-heroes are resting, the floor of the room they are in becomes warmer over the course of the hours. It is never hot enough to be painful — it is even pleasant, driving away the chill of the chamber — but it is disconcerting nonetheless. There is a smell of oily smoke, suggesting there are fires below that are creeping towards the Company.

**ECHOING SILENCE:** The silence of the city somehow becomes louder and heavier. Even the beating of the Player-heroes' hearts and the sound of their breathing seems overwhelmingly loud and intrusive. Every noise is bizarrely magnified, as if they were trespassing in some holy place.

**DRUMS IN THE DEEP:** *They are coming…*

# Drums in the Deep

*Doom doom, it rolled again, as if huge hands were turning the very caverns of Moria into a vast drum.*

Moria has fallen. It belongs to the Orcs now — to the Orcs, and to worse things. Outsiders might be able to slip through Moria without being noticed, but any exploration is almost certain to attract the attention of foes.

In game terms, this is represented by the rules for Eye Awareness as described on p. 169 of *The One Ring* rulebook.

## Eye Awareness in Moria

The core rulebook outlines the main methods for increasing a Company's Eye Awareness score. While in Moria, the actions detailed in the following paragraphs also contribute to raising their visibility to the Enemy.

### MAKING NOISE

Most of Moria is silent as a tomb. Footsteps or loud speech echo through the passageways, drawing the attention of Orcs — and worse things. Especially loud noises, such as smashing through locked doors, the grinding of ancient machinery, rockfalls, or the screams and shouts of battle can be heard for miles in the mines.

If the Company voluntarily takes some action that causes a loud noise, raise the Eye Awareness. The Loremaster should make it clear that the action will result in such a consequence, and let the Player-heroes decide if the reward of the action is worth the risk.

- **LESSER NOISE (+1 POINT):** Shouting, singing, dropping a stone into a well
- **LOUD NOISE (+2 POINTS):** The noise of combat, breaking down a door, smashing through an obstacle
- **POWERFUL NOISE (+3 POINTS):** Beating a drum, causing a cave-in, explosions

### ENCOUNTERS

The three major Orc-tribes — the Orcs of the Misty Mountains, the Mordor-orcs, and the Orcs of Udûn — all have scouts and sentries. These look-outs signal encounters with enemies back to their masters, and soon the mountains crawl with Orcs.

If the Player-heroes encounter an Orc-band, and some of their foes survive the battle, then raise the Eye Awareness by 1, 2 or 3 points, depending on how many foes escaped, how close the Company is to an enemy stronghold, and whether or not the Company can flee the scene before reinforcements arrive.

- **LESSER DISCOVERY (+1 POINT):** A lone foe escapes
- **MAJOR DISCOVERY (+2 POINTS):** A messenger escapes
- **PERILOUS DISCOVERY (+3 POINTS):** A messenger escapes and there are more enemies nearby

## Hunt Threshold

The base Hunt threshold for a Company in Moria is set at 14, as Moria is considered a Dark Land (standard modifiers apply — see page 172 of *The One Ring*).

> Once the Company's Eye Awareness score matches or exceeds the Hunt Threshold, the Company is revealed and a Revelation episode is played out.

### Revelation Episodes in Moria

In addition to the Revelation episode's examples provided on page 173 of the core rules, the present section features four sets of Revelation episodes for Moria — the Loremaster can pick the table that is most appropriate to the circumstances.

The *Dire Portents* table is mostly foreshadowing and natural perils; *Orc Assault*, obviously, means Orcs and similar foes have found the Player-heroes. *Terrors of the Dark* emphasises the mysteries and horrors of Moria. *Ghâsh!* heralds the approach of the Balrog.

### Dire Portents

| Feat Die Roll | Revelation | Effect |
|---|---|---|
|  | Smoke in the Air | The Company smells smoke; hot air laden with fine ash rises up from below. They have delved too deep, and awakened a horror in the mines. The next Revelation episode comes from the *Ghâsh!* Table, but the roll is *Favoured*. |
| 1 | Cave-in | The ceiling creaks, stone pillars topple, and some of the Player-heroes risk being buried in debris. Everyone must roll AWARENESS; those who fail suffer a severe loss of Endurance. |
| 2 | The Way is Shut | The Company comes to a door that is sealed from the other side, and there is no way through. If on a Journey, they must add 1 day to their journey and suffer an additional Journey event. If exploring, they cannot enter the Landmark through the most obvious route. If foes are near, they cannot fly. |
| 3 | Dreadful Dreams | All Player-heroes are beset by nightmares. They gain 1 point of Shadow (Dread) and 1 point of Fatigue. Dwarves in particular may dream of the fall of Moria. |
| 4 | Misfortune | One Player-hero chosen at random loses a weapon or useful item (player's choice). |
| 5 | Crack in the Floor | A chasm yawns before the Company, forcing them to climb or leap across the abyss (an ATHLETICS roll). |
| 6 | Horror of Death | The Company comes across a corpse — maybe an ancient skeleton of some fallen Dwarf, or the fresh remnants of an escaped prisoner or rival explorer. They gain 2 points of Shadow (Dread). |
| 7 | Lure of the Abyss | One of the Company is tempted by their Flaws. A Grasping hero might glimpse gold in a crack; an Idle one might feel compelled to throw a stone down a well; a Spiteful one might start an argument. |
| 8 | Goblin-feet | Goblins follow the Player-heroes. These malicious wretches do not attack — they know they cannot defeat a band of well-armed intruders — but they follow and watch. Reduce the Hunt Threshold by 4 until the Company deals with them, and the next Revelation comes from the *Orc Assault* table. |
| 9 | Eyes in the Dark | The Player-heroes glimpse eyes watching them from the darkness. For the rest of this expedition into Moria, all Eye Awareness gains are *doubled*. |
| 10 | Sudden Darkness | A sudden gust of wind or bad air extinguishes the Company's torches. Unless they have magical light, or are close to the surface, they are plunged into darkness. |
| ᚠ | A Light in the Dark | The Company comes to a chamber where natural light shines from outside. The bright sun dismays Orcs and other creatures of darkness. |

## ORC ASSAULT

| FEAT DIE ROLL | DOOM | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
|  | Smoke in the Air | The Company smells smoke; hot air laden with fine ash rises up from below. They have delved too deep, and awakened a horror in the mines. The next Revelation comes from the *Ghâsh!* table. |
| 1 | Infamous Orc | The Company encounters a group of Orcs escorting one of the Chiefs of Moria. Roll on the Moria Orc-chiefs table on page XX (reroll if the Target is dead or otherwise nonsensical). |
| 2 | They Have a Cave-troll | A host of Orcs (including one Cave-troll Slinker) attacks the Company, aiming to pen them up in a dead-end passageway or chamber so they can be captured or slain. |
| 3 | Orc-slavers | Orcs take the Company by surprise and one of them is captured for interrogation and enslavement. The Orcs retreat to the stronghold of their faction (Malech's Fortress, p. XX, the Temple of Udûn, p. XX, or the Mountain Galleries, p. XX) and the Player-heroes must choose whether to leave their comrade to a grim fate, or embark on a perilous quest to rescue them. |
| 4 | Orc-stalkers | Orcs follow the Company – not attacking yet, but trying to corral them into an unfavourable place, or waiting until the Company is more vulnerable. Unless the Player-heroes can trick or escape the Orcs, in the next battle they are Ambushed and fight as Moderately hindered. |
| 5 | Sudden Ambush! | The Company is ambushed by Orcs. The AWARENESS roll to avoid being caught by surprise *loses (1d)*. |
| 6 | Orc-sentries | Orcs patrol the route ahead. The Company must sneak past or face a battle. |
| 7 | Roaming Cave-troll | A Great Cave-troll wanders in at the worst possible moment – possibly disturbing the Company as they rest, or arriving to block their retreat. |
| 8 | Sabotage! | The Goblins do some mischief that does not directly injure the Player-heroes, but is nonetheless damaging for that; they might spoil food, kidnap a pony, steal items, or lure the Company into an ambush or other peril. |
| 9 | Goblin-sneaks | Goblins stalk the Company. The creatures do not attack immediately; instead, they follow the Player-heroes, creeping after them and tapping the walls to signal their position to other foes. Reduce the Hunt Threshold by 2 while the Goblins track the Company. The Company can rid themselves of these troublesome Goblins by sneaking away or hunting the wretches. |
| 10 | Goblin-trap | Goblins delight in explosions, traps and other malicious devices, and the Company run into such a booby-trap. An AWARENESS, SCAN or CRAFT test might avert the peril; otherwise, a random Player-hero suffers a grievous loss of Endurance by falling, fire, suffocation or poisoning, depending on circumstances. |
| ᚠ | Close Encounter | The Company "nearly" encounters a foe, but by some unlikely mischance, manages to avoid a fight. Maybe they see the enemy coming and can hide, or a door happens to be locked and they hear the enemy on the far side. Roll again on this table to determine the peril the Company nearly encountered. |

## TERRORS OF THE DARK

| FEAT DIE ROLL | DOOM | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| | Doom Approaches | The heroes smell smoke in the air. The next Revelation comes from the *Ghâsh!* table, and the roll is *Ill-favoured*. |
| 1 | Stalked by a Nameless Thing | A Nameless Thing crawls out of the depths and pursues the Company. Unless they can throw it off the scent, it attacks during their next rest. |
| 2 | Nightmarish Delusions | One of the Player-heroes suffers from terrible delusions; they gain 2 points of Shadow (Sorcery). If they gain any Shadow, they temporarily believe the delusions and act accordingly. |
| 3 | Twisting Paths | Tunnels and corridors twist back on themselves, forcing the company to backtrack. If on a Journey, they must add 1 day to their journey and suffer an additional Journey event, *losing (1d)* on the Skill roll to resolve the event. |
| 4 | Orc-horns | Orcs are close at hand! Reduce the Hunt Threshold by 4, and the next Revelation episode comes from the Orc Assault table. |
| 5 | Unseen Foe | *Something* is following the Player-heroes. Reduce the Hunt Threshold by 2 until they deal with this unseen foe — assuming this enemy is one that can be driven away with sword or fire. |
| 6 | Missing Companion | One of the Player-heroes, or a companion like a pony or a Loremaster character, wanders off and becomes lost (Loremaster's choice). |
| 7 | Crumbling Masonry | The way ahead becomes unusually perilous because this section of Moria is ruined; it might be flooded, prone to collapse, blocked by debris, or otherwise decayed. Passing through this section is a Skill Endeavour with a Resistance of 6. |
| 8 | Sight of Horror | The Company comes upon something horribly demoralising — a desecrated monument, butchered corpses, or some other horror. They gain 2 points of Shadow (Dread). |
| 9 | The Endless Dark | The path ahead is wearisome and supplies run low. The Company's food supply is depleted, and each Player-hero gains 2 Fatigue. |
| 10 | Led Astray | Clues — or a friendly character — seem to guide the Player-heroes towards their destination, but they are actually led into a trap. |
| | A Moment of Truth | The Company discover a clue or another secret pointing towards a Hidden Landmark. They might find a book, a carved message, a lost key, or have a prophetic dream. |

## GHÂSH!

| FEAT DIE ROLL | DOOM | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| | Durin's Bane! | The Company encounter Durin's Bane! The Balrog engages them in combat. Fleeing is the best and likely the only option. One Player-hero can always stay behind and fight the Foe beyond any of them so the rest (of the fools...) can fly. |
| 1 | Nameless Horror | The Player-heroes encounter a Nameless Thing that has slithered up from the depths. |
| 2 | Distant Flames | The Player-heroes encounter Durin's Bane, but at a distance — maybe they see the Balrog at the far end of a long tunnel or across the width of a great hall. They can flee without having to fight the enemy with a successful AWARENESS roll. |

| FEAT DIE ROLL | DOOM | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | A Spell of Closing | The Balrog seals a door or other portal behind the Company, trapping them. Clearly, sorcery is at work – there is no natural reason why the door should be so immovable. But without counter-magic to match, they cannot open the door. They cannot get out. |
| 4 | Distant Roar | The Company hears the roaring of the Balrog, like a great hiss of flame. They gain 3 points of Shadow (Dread). |
| 5 | Power of Udûn! | The Balrog puts forth its power into its servants. All foes in the next combat gain a Moderate advantage, as well as the *Flame of Udûn* Fell Ability (see page XX). |
| 6 | The Shadow Deepens | The shadows become almost solid, impeding action. All Player-heroes *lose (1d)* on any roll that may suffer from visual impairment. |
| 7 | Choking Fumes | Foul fumes rise from the depths. Unless the Player-heroes climb to cleaner air quickly, they suffer a severe loss of Endurance from suffocation. |
| 8 | Unreasoning Terror | Crippling, unreasoning, unnamable terror seizes all members of the Company. All gain 2 points of Shadow (Dread). Those who fail the test feel the urge to flee. Those who succeeded may attempt an ENHEARTEN roll to reassure their comrades before the Company is scattered. |
| 9 | Leaping Flames | Flames explode from a nearby crack or cave mouth. Anyone trying to pass through the flames risks a severe loss of Endurance from fire. |
| 10 | Malicious Thought | Durin's Bane bends its thoughts upon the intruders. All heroes gain 2 points of Shadow (Sorcery). Those who fail find themselves unconsciously acting in ways that serve the Balrog's intentions. The Guide might inadvertently lead the Company into The Deeps; the Scout might get lost and wander off. |
| ᚴ | A Foresight Is on Me | A Player-hero glimpses Durin's Bane in the darkness, or in their dreams. They know that the Balrog is nearby, and that a quick retreat is advisable. Like Dáin, they have seen the shadow that waits in the deep... |

## MORIA-MADNESS

A curious condition afflicts Dwarves (and only Dwarves) who travel in Moria. This place is sacred; the memory of Moria burns in the heart of every Dwarf. They dream of the mountains and the city beneath. The anticipation of walking in the halls of Durin, the wonder at being in such a city of marvels, and the heart-rending sight of their ancestral realms defiled is enough to drive some into madness. Those afflicted by Moria-madness convince themselves that the city is as it once was – they look at a ruin consumed by the Shadow and they see a glorious hall lit by blazing lamps. They look at a broken statue and see a perfect work of art; they mistake pebbles for gemstones, or tin for Mithril.

A Dwarf-hero who suffers a Bout of Madness in Moria may, if the Player wishes, suffer from Moria-madness instead of the usual condition associated with their Shadow Path.

### MORIA-MADNESS

| BOUT OF MADNESS | FLAW |
|---|---|
| #1 | Distracted |
| #2 | Mistrustful |
| #3 | Blinded |
| #4 | Jealous |

# RANDOM CHAMBER GENERATOR

*'I have no memory of this place at all!' said Gandalf, standing uncertainly under the arch.*

Moria is far too large — and far too ruined and empty for every room to be reasonably detailed. Instead, as the Company explores its halls, use the tables below to generate inspiration for random rooms.

The *Chamber Type* table, obviously, gives ideas for the type of room encountered. Modify it by the original *Appearance* of the room and its current *Condition*. Optionally, roll to determine the *Challenge* the room poses.

**CHAMBER TYPE TABLE**

| FEAT DIE ROLL | CHAMBER TYPE |
|---|---|
| 👁 | Orc-nest |
| 1 | Utility |
| 2 | Storeroom |
| 3 | Small Dwelling |
| 4 | Stairs |
| 5 | Well or Watercourse |
| 6 | Guard Post or Armoury |
| 7 | Forge |
| 8 | Workshop |
| 9 | Large Dwelling |
| 10 | Civic Building |
| Y | Great Hall |

**ORC-NEST:** This room was not built by the Dwarves — it is a den of Orcs.

**UTILITY:** Moria contained endless small passageways and tunnels off the main thoroughfares. Some of these held aqueducts for carrying fresh water down from the heights; others were air ducts, or sewers. Still others were the equivalent of servants' hallways or backstreets. Those who knew Khazad-dûm well could move from one end of the city to the other unseen.

Goblins explored most of these little byways, but some remain undiscovered to this day.

**STOREROOM:** Vast were the cellars and storehouses of Moria. Many of these storerooms were given over to food; the Dwarves had a terrible fear of rats eating their winter supplies, so they built cunning mousetraps and bred small dogs to guard their supplies. The descendants of these dogs, grown blind and hairless, still run wild in the dark.

**SMALL DWELLING:** A house for a single Dwarf. Dwarven families were rare — Dwarven women numbered no more than a third of the population, and not every Dwarf wished to marry, so many Dwarves lived alone. Small dwellings like these typically centred around a workroom, work being the centre of a Dwarf's life, with the bedroom and other necessities off to the side. Some clusters of dwellings opened onto a courtyard or shared space, often with a large oven for communal cooking.

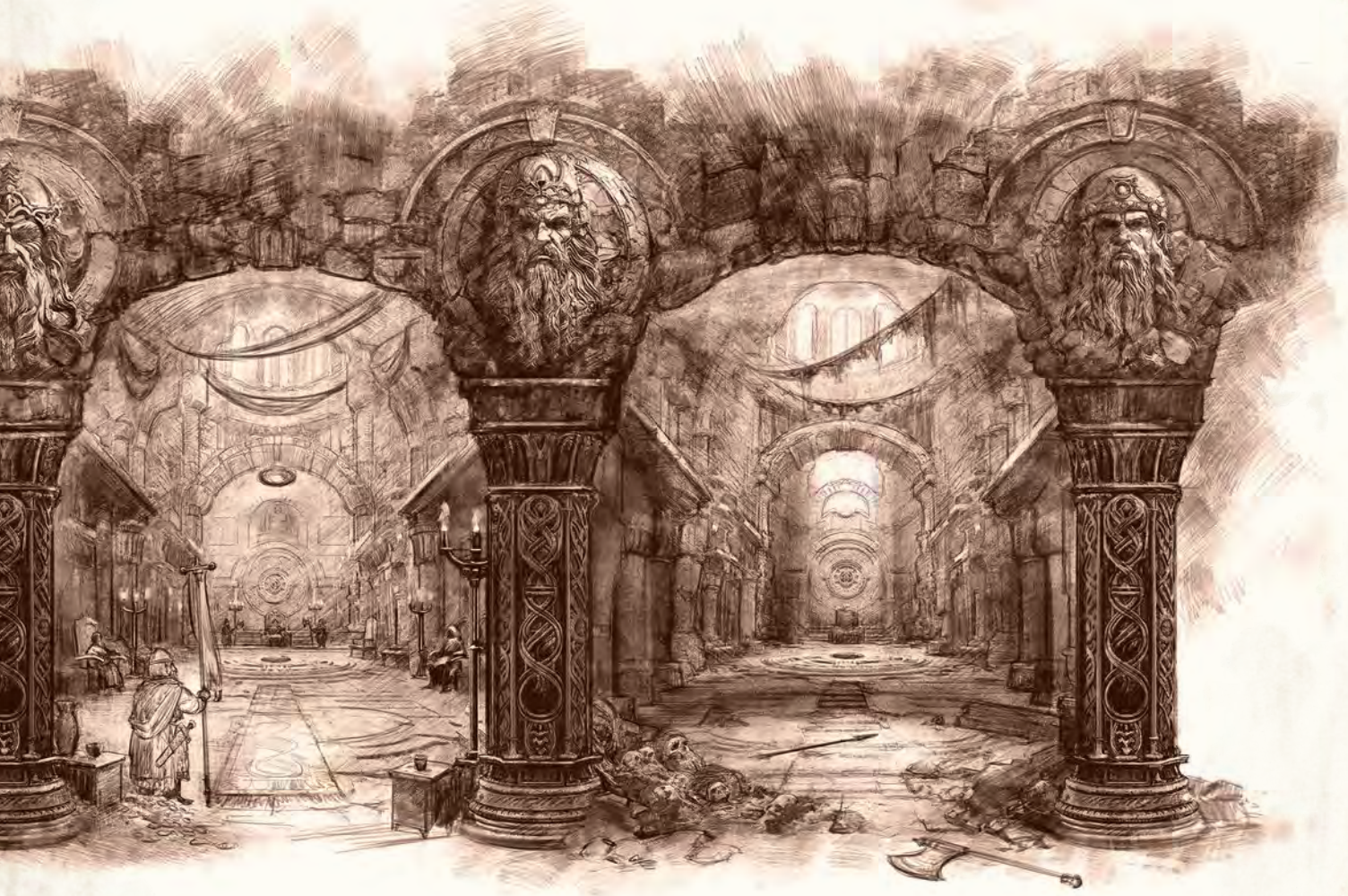
**STAIRS:** As Khazad-dûm extended over many levels, the Dwarves built great stone concourses — and, in later years, mechanical elevators powered by waterwheels or by hauling on ropes. The larger stairs in the city were also public auditoria where the affairs of the day were discussed.

**WELL OR WATERCOURSE:** Wells drew water from both natural and Dwarf-built reservoirs. The neglect and malice of the Goblins means that few of the artificial reservoirs survive, and all wells within Moria are suspect.

**GUARD POST OR ARMOURY:** Especially in its latter years, Moria was a fortress. While the gates of Khazad-dûm were never breached in any siege, the city was endangered by Goblin sappers, who would dig tunnels from the Goblin-caves of the Misty Mountains to break into the mines.

**FORGE:** The forges of Moria were wonders indeed — they were clustered around titanic chimneys and flues, so that many fires could share the same air vents. At first, the forges were fired with wood, and the hungry axes of the Dwarves devoured the forests of Dimrill Dale. Later, the deep forges were dug, fuelled by coal. The Goblins continued to use some of the deep forges, but centuries of accumulated debris have blocked the air shafts, so the lower levels are choked with soot and smoke.

**WORKSHOP:** The Dwarves wrought wonders, especially in the days of their friendship with the Elves of Hollin. They were chiefly known for their mastery of smithing and metallurgy, but there were all manner of crafts — the Dwarves may love metal and stone, but also they carve wood and weave cloth with equal diligence.



**LARGE DWELLING:** Extended Dwarven families lived in mansions, where several generations would live in the same complex. A great door connected each dwelling with the rest of the city, and this door carried the sigil of the clan.

**CIVIC BUILDING:** Moria was a place of scholarship and culture, and the city had many libraries, archives, galleries and meeting-halls. The Dwarves were exacting historians and academics — and they delighted in bureaucracy too, considering ink as fine a thing to work with as gold or iron. Many of the civic buildings of the Dwarrowdelf, alas, burned when the city fell, and much knowledge was lost.

**GREAT HALL:** The Halls where the Dwarves gathered. They were markets and feast-halls, debating chambers and places of prayer; the mansions of princes and chieftains. It was in the Halls that the Dwarves housed their most cherished works, and where they glorified their heroes and ancestors.

**CONDITION TABLE**

| FEAT DIE ROLL | CONDITION |
|---|---|
| 👁 | Held by foes |
| 1 | Blocked |
| 2 | Suspiciously intact |
| 3 | Flooded |
| 4 | Utterly ruined |
| 5 | Goblin-gnawed |
| 6 | Shattered by earthquake |
| 7 | Burnt |
| 8 | Despoiled |
| 9 | Ruined by the passage of time |
| 10 | Mostly intact |
| ᚠ | A safe place to rest |

**HELD BY FOES:** This chamber is occupied by living adversaries — Orcs, Trolls or other foul creatures, rival treasure hunters, or something more dangerous. Draw your weapons and prepare to fight!

**BLOCKED:** The chamber is inaccessible, at least by this route. The door may be shut and barred from the inside, or the access corridor is blocked by fallen rocks, or some other barrier stops the Company from proceeding. Many of the doors in Moria were magical, and Dwarf-doors cannot be found unless you know what you are looking for. It may be possible to find another way in.

**SUSPICIOUSLY INTACT:** The chamber is remarkably intact — is something guarding it? Is there some hidden peril, like poisonous gas, that keeps intruders out?

**FLOODED:** The chamber is flooded with water. In the upper levels, it is likely that some broken pipe or aqueduct now rushes through the chamber before cascading into the depths; in the Deeps, the chamber may be flooded with standing water.

**UTTERLY RUINED:** The ceiling has fallen in, the chamber has collapsed, or it is so smashed as to be unrecognisable. Nothing can be salvaged here.

**GOBLIN-GNAWED:** Goblins are like woodworms — they riddle the place with tunnels and hidey-holes. Some of these little tunnels may lead to the Goblin-caves of the mountains; others might conceal a host of Goblins lurking in the dark.

**SHATTERED BY EARTHQUAKE:** The mountains grumble and stir in their sleep, especially violent Caradhras. Chasms have opened in the floor of those chambers damaged but not destroyed by tremors; in some cases, these chasms may lead down to lower levels.

**BURNT:** Terrible fires raged through much of the city when Durin's Bane arose; other, lesser fires swept through other parts of Moria when the Goblins meddled with the Dwarven forges. The stone walls of burnt chambers may be mostly intact, but little else remains.

**DESPOILED:** Goblins are full of malice, and love to destroy and to deface beautiful things. This chamber is largely intact, but everything in it has been deliberately broken or made ugly — or rigged with traps.

**RUINED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME:** The chamber is exposed to wind or water, or has been filled with the slow accumulation of dust and snow. Maybe a thousand generations of spiders nest here. In any case, the chamber has succumbed to rot and few of its original fittings remain.

**MOSTLY INTACT:** The chamber is dark and cold, but otherwise remarkably well-preserved. The Player-heroes might catch a brief glimpse of how this place once looked, and be cheered by the thought that the Orcs cannot conquer forever!

**A PLACE TO REST:** The chamber feels… well, if not safe, then at least defensible. As long as no fool of a Took throws anything down a well, the Company might be able to rest here for a few hours without being discovered.

### APPEARANCE TABLE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | ROOM TYPE |
|---|---|
|  | Shunned |
| 1 | Unfinished |
| 2 | Austere |
| 3 | Ancient |
| 4 | Simple |
| 5 | Heroic |
| 6 | Homely |
| 7 | Richly decorated |
| 8 | Elven |
| 9 | Fortified |
| 10 | Natural |
| | Enchanted |

**SHUNNED:** For some reason, this chamber was shunned by the Dwarves. Perhaps they sealed or even bricked up the doors, and carved runes of warning upon the lintel. Peril or darkness lingers here.

**UNFINISHED:** The chamber was in the process of being constructed or repaired when the city fell, and the job remains unfinished. Scaffolding like the skeleton of some beast looms out of the darkness, and the tools of the builders lie where they were left. Any Dwarf in the Company feels the prickling urge to get the job finished.

**AUSTERE:** The chamber is bare of all decoration — or perhaps any ornament was wiped away by the ravages of time. Little information can be gleaned from the bare stone walls.

**ANCIENT:** Chambers such as this one were built early in the history of Moria, perhaps all the way back in Durin's day. The stonecraft is marvellous; the style simple but well executed.

**SIMPLE:** An unremarkable chamber, little more than functional. No Lord or Dwarf of note ever dwelt here; nor were great deeds performed in it.

**HEROIC:** The room is decorated in a heroic style — likely with statues of Dwarven heroes of old, or carvings of battles. There may be places on the walls where weapons and armour were mounted long ago.

**HOMELY:** The chamber was built for comfort, not grandeur. It is low-ceilinged, with the hearth close at hand.

**RICHLY DECORATED:** Even the rot and ruin of a thousand years of neglect and occupation cannot erase the astounding artistry of this chamber. Every surface was decorated in some fashion — carved to resemble fabulous creatures, gilded or girded in expensive stone. This was a place of prestige and grandeur; if there are still treasures to be found in Moria, then surely they are nearby.

**ELVEN:** This chamber was built when the Dwarves of Moria were friends with the Elves of Hollin, and much evil must befall a place before it wholly forgets the Elves, if once they dwelt there. Perhaps there are living plants here, or lamps of crystal, or the echo of forgotten songs — or a lingering touch of magic.

**FORTIFIED:** This chamber was built in the last days of Moria, when the Dwarves feared attack from without. The walls are especially thick, the doors reinforced to withstand assault, everything made to hold out against Orcs or Dragons or other servants of the Enemy.

**NATURAL:** Not a chamber, but a cavern or other natural opening in the rock, adapted by the Dwarves.

**ENCHANTED:** Roll again, but this chamber has some Dwarf-magic in it. Perhaps there are fragments of spells worked into the stone, or runes of power upon the door.

### CHALLENGE TABLE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | CHALLENGE |
|---|---|
|  | Combat |
| 1 | None (Desolation) |
| 2 | Athletics |
| 3 | Battle |
| 4 | Enhearten |
| 5 | Healing |
| 6 | Hunting |
| 7 | Lore |
| 8 | Riddle |
| 9 | Stealth |
| 10 | None (Foreshadowing) |
| | Token of hope |

**COMBAT:** The Company faces an immediate peril — a foul creature, an ambush, a hazard. There is no way of avoiding this peril: they must defeat the enemy in order to survive.

**NONE (DESOLATION):** Not every room demands dice-rolling, and not every room hides some secret. This chamber is empty and long-abandoned. Emphasising the desolation of the ruined city makes other encounters more memorable.

**ATHLETICS:** Part of this chamber has collapsed or been blocked by debris; to pass through the chamber, the Company must climb or leap over the obstacles; failure risks injury.

**BATTLE:** Enemies are closing in, and the Player-heroes must make a choice whether to lie in ambush, fortify their position — by barring the access to the chamber for example — or leave in haste. A successful roll of **BATTLE** can help them in adjudicating the situation.

**ENHEARTEN:** Something in the chamber reminds the Company of the current state of the once-great city of the Dwarves, filling the Player-heroes with a sense of hopelessness. A successful roll of **ENHEARTEN** is required to raise their spirits — otherwise, everyone in the Company is considered to be *Ill-favoured* on their next roll.

**HEALING:** The chamber is filled by invisible noxious fumes that causes the Player-heroes to cough incessantly, and their eyes to water. A **HEALING** roll allows them to continue their exploration.

**HUNTING:** Foes have passed this way recently; a **HUNTING** roll permits the Company to determine which way they went, and if they are still close at hand. Failure raises the Eye Awareness Level by 1.

**LORE:** This chamber was once of significance, but only the learned recall its secrets. A successful roll of **LORE** is required to understand the importance of the place.

**RIDDLE:** The chamber is in the middle of a complicated maze of multiple passages and twisting corridors. A successful roll of **RIDDLE** points the Company towards the right direction.

**STEALTH:** The chamber or the passages opening from it seem to intensify all sounds. If the Player-heroes fail at a **STEALTH** roll, they make a terrible noise (see Drums in the Deep, on page XX).

**NONE (FORESHADOWING):** There is no immediate danger, but the chamber contains some inkling or affords a glimpse of impending doom. Perhaps the chamber has a balcony looking down at the caves outside, and the Company glimpses shadowy figures creeping through the gloom; a desiccated corpse hints at a nearby trap; a secret door lets a burglar eavesdrop on two Orcs talking about what the *"Boss"* has planned for the intruders.

**TOKEN OF HOPE:** Something in the chamber inspires the Company to believe that their quest will not be in vain. Maybe daylight breaks through a distant sky-shaft, or one of the Dwarven Player-heroes spots the ancient sigil of their clan carved above a doorway, or maybe there is just the glint of a gold jewel amid the rubble.

# RANDOM ORC-BAND GENERATOR

*"There are Orcs, very many of them,' he said. 'And some are large and evil: black Uruks of Mordor. For the moment they are hanging back, but there is something else there. A great cave-troll, I think, or more than one."*

To randomly generate a band of Orcs roaming into Moria, roll the Feat-die once to determine the leader, and 1 Success die per Player-hero. Compare each die roll individually on the tables below, and add up the foes encountered to determine the full extent of the Orc-band encountered.

### FEAT DIE TABLE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | FOE |
|---|---|
|  | A named Orc leader, a Great Orc Chief, or a Great Cave-troll |
| 1 | Cave-troll Slinker |
| 2 | Great Orc Bodyguard |
| 3 | Orc-chieftain |
| | Orc-chieftain, and the enemies are sleeping, feasting, distracted, or already engaged in some task – the Company can take them by surprise. |

### SUCCESS DIE TABLE

| SUCCESS DIE ROLL | FOE |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1 Great Orc Bodyguard |
| 2 | 1 Orc Guard and 1 Goblin Archer |
| 3 | 2 Orc Soldiers |
| 4 | 1 Orc Guard |
| 5 | 1 Orc Soldier |
| 6 | 1 Goblin Archer |

**EXAMPLE:**
*A Company of four Player-heroes wandering in Moria encounter a pack of Orcs. Rolling, the Loremaster gets 2, 3, 6 and 6 on the Success Dice, and an 8 on the Feat die. That results in an encounter with: 3 Goblin Archers, 2 Orc Soldiers, 1 Orc Guard, led by an Orc-chieftain.*

CHAPTER 4

# FELL FOES

*'There are older and fouler things than Orcs in the deep places of the world.'*

The city of Khazad-dûm may appear empty of life to whoever passes through its gates, as its roads are silent as those leading to the houses of the dead. But what fills its remote chambers and passages is not mere darkness. Baleful fires light the deepest halls, and the sound of passing feet echoes across invisible passages. There's more than just Orcs in Moria…

This chapter presents a selection of adversaries, from the different factions of Orcs who made Moria their warren, to the unfortunate Dwarves who survived the coming of Durin's Bane and other horrors. And of course, the Balrog of Moria itself is described here in its full, terrible might.

# ORCS

*Apparently the members of two or three tribes were present, and they could not understand one another's orc-speech…*

Despite their losses at the Battle of Dimrill Dale and the Battle of Five Armies, there are a great many Orcs in Moria. The fortress is one of their most valued holdings — partly for its sheer size and strength, partly for the resources of its mines, but also because Orcs hold grudges just as strongly as any Dwarf. They will not give up Khazad-dûm without a fight.

The Orcs of Moria are divided into three factions — or rather, four. Most Orcs in Moria do not have a deep-seated allegiance, and simply obey whichever chieftain seems strongest, or whose whip bites hardest.

Just like most Orcs, all Orcish dwellers of Moria suffer from the *Hate Sunlight* Fell Ability: they lose 1 Hate for each round they spend in the full light of the sun.

### ORCS BY LOCATION

The three major Orc-factions hold different parts of Moria, and skirmish over territory. Explorers in Moria may spot different Orc-signs marking the ever-shifting borders within the ruined city, and may even be able to take advantage of disputes and rivalries among the Orcs.

If the Company encounters Orcs, use their current location as a guide for the faction they likely meet. This is not prescriptive, and the Company could encounter a different Orc-faction: raiders, scouts, or on some other mission.

- **OLD MORIA, THE DWARROWDELF, THE ROAD, DIMRILL DALE:** Orcs of Moria
- **THE MOUNTAINS OF MORIA:** Orcs of Mordor
- **THE DEEPS, THE MINES:** Orcs of Udûn
- **WEST MORIA:** Uncontested.

## Orcs of Moria

These are the most numerous of the Orcs in Moria. The Moria-orcs remember the bitter defeat at the Battle of the Five Armies, and see Moria as a fortress where they can hide from the hated sun and grow strong again, until the time comes to take revenge on the Free Peoples. They call Gorgol son of Bolg their warlord. Gorgol dwells to the north, under Mount Gundabad, but messengers regularly pass south by secret tunnels and hidden ways, bringing orders to Gorgol's lieutenant in Moria, Malech One-eye (see page XX).

At the centre of Malech's realm is his fortress in the heart of the Dwarrowdelf (page XX), but his forces are scattered all over the city, in small warrens and warbands. Malech has a host of swift-footed, soft-shoed Goblins who carry messages to his scattered Captains; when intruders are sighted, drums are used to muster the host of Moria. He deliberately keeps his forces divided most of the time, and sometimes even sends his Orcs on doomed missions to eliminate some rival. Cruel games and hollow malice are common among these Orcs.

Each smaller warband has its own banner or sigil, but they also bear the sign of Malech's master Gorgol — the severed head of a bear.

Moria-orcs are a variant of the Orcs of the North (see page 149 of *The One Ring*), with the *Denizen of the Dark* Fell Ability in addition to their other abilities.

In many cases it is possible to find Orc Drummers among the Moria-orcs. These Orcs have the same stats as Orc Soldiers, with the following Fell Ability:

*Drums in the Deep.* Instead of attacking, spend 1 Hate to increase the Eye Awareness of the Company by 3.

*Beyond the fire he saw swarming black figures: there seemed to be hundreds of orcs. They brandished spears and scimitars which shone red as blood in the firelight. "Doom, doom rolled the drum-beats, growing louder and louder, doom, doom.*

### Moria-orc Strongholds

Malech's Fortress, formerly the Palace of Stairs, is in the **Dwarrowdelf** (see page XX). Malech's lieutenants control the **Dimrill Gate** (page XX), the **21st Hall** (page XX), some of the **Armouries** (page XX), the **Ledge of Woe** (page XX) and the **Black Barbican** (page XX).

## Orcs of Udûn

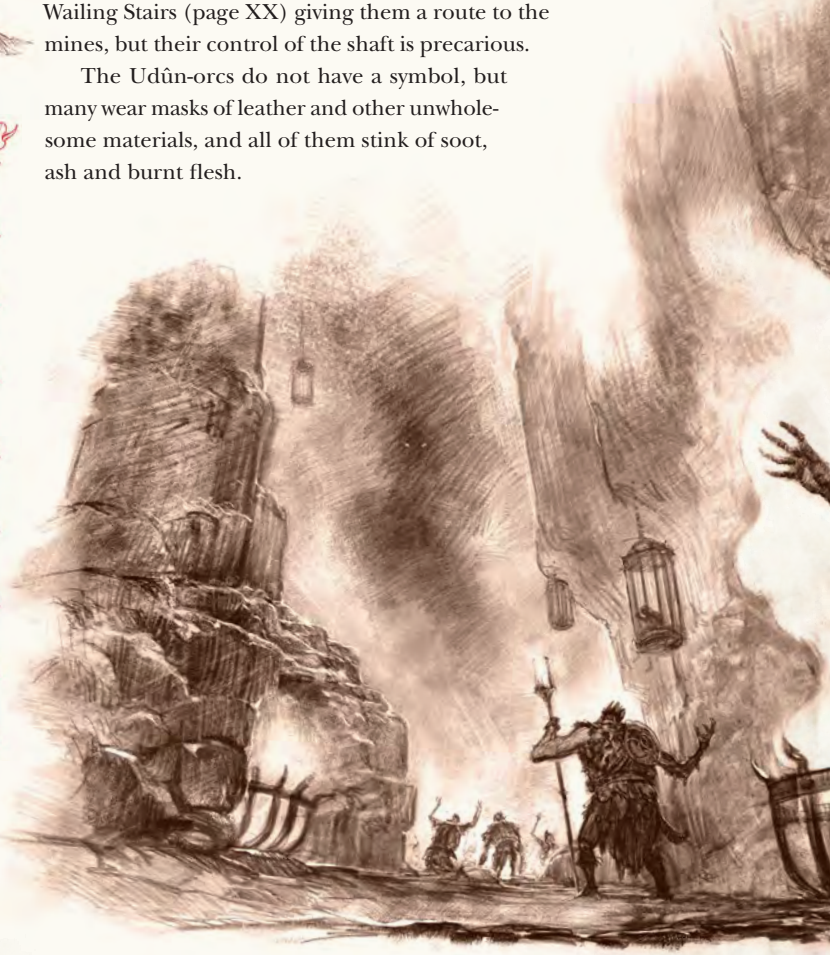
The fire-cult of the Udûn-orcs are seen — rightly — as crazed fanatics by the other Orc clans. They serve and worship the Balrog, and make sacrificial offerings to Durin's Bane, throwing their victims into blazing balefires in the Deeps. Some among them are convinced they have been touched and changed by the Balrog, and made into vessels for a portion of the Bane's corrupted power.

The Orcs of Udûun control the lower levels of the city, and parts of the mines; disputes over access to the *Mithril* veins are a source of constant strife between the Udûn-orcs and the rest. At present, Malech's forces control the Wailing Stairs (page XX) giving them a route to the mines, but their control of the shaft is precarious.

The Udûn-orcs do not have a symbol, but many wear masks of leather and other unwholesome materials, and all of them stink of soot, ash and burnt flesh.

### GORGOL, SON OF BOLG

In the aftermath of the Battle of Five Armies Gorgol was one of many contenders for the throne of Bolg, son of Azog. He was Bolg's eldest son, and fought in the battle, but he was forced to flee into the Withered Heath when the Eagles came. It took him six years to return to Gundabad, but once there it didn't take much for him to claim his father's throne. To those few who immediately swore fealty to him he promised riches; those who opposed him, and they were many, fell under the scimitar of his grandfather Azog, a huge blade forged in Carn Dûm by dark smiths and bound with spells by the Witch-king himself.



The high priest of the Orcs of Udûn is *Thu the Firespeaker*. He has relatively few followers, but they have the favour of the Balrog, so they are dangerous indeed.

*'As I stood there I could hear orc-voices on the other side; at any moment I thought they would burst it open. I could not hear what was said; they seemed to be talking in their own hideous language. All I caught was ghâsh: that is "fire".'*

### UDÛN-ORC STRONGHOLDS

The cult is centred on the **Udûn-Temple** (page XX) — and the **Balrog's Throne** (page XX), far below.

## *Udûn-orc Fanatic*

There isn't an Udûn-orc who isn't ready to die in battle or be sacrificed to the shadow and the flame. All fight relentlessly, never giving quarter or asking any.

**UDÛN-ORC FANATIC**
Crazed, Tough

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 4

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 4 | – | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Torch-staff 3 (4/14, Fiery Blow*)
* The attack burns the target, inflicting a severe Endurance loss from fire.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Heartless.* The Udûn-orc Fanatic is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

## *Udûn-orc Fire-touched*

Chosen by Thu himself from among those that the Balrog has warped, the Fire-touched are so insanely aggressive that they make the Fanatics look like peaceful creatures.

**UDÛN-ORC FIRE-TOUCHED**
Frenzied, Fearsome

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | 2 | 6 | – | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Torch-staff 3 (4/14, Fiery Blow*)
* The attack burns the target, inflicting a severe Endurance loss from fire.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Heartless.* The Udûn-orc Fire-touched is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Udûn-orc Fire-touched that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the creature is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

## Orcs of Mordor

It has long been Sauron's desire to conquer Moria. Even when he possessed the One Ring and was at the apex of his power, he was unable to break the defences of the Dwarves. He laid siege to the city during the War of the Elves and Sauron in the Second Age, but victory eluded him. When he returned to Middle-earth after the destruction of Númenor, he was defeated by the Last Alliance before he could march on Khazad-dûm. Even in the Third Age, when he resided in Dol Guldur across the Vale of Anduin from Moria, it held out against him. Moria has only ever fallen from within.

Sauron declared his return to Mordor in 2951, and relit the fires of Mount Doom in 2954. Under cover of ash and smoke, he sent out Orcish messengers from Minas Morgul and the Towers of the Teeth. These Orcs crept north and west, sneaking through Mirkwood and through the Grey

Mountains, awakening the scattered servants of the Enemy. In 2960, the first of these messengers reached the East-gate of Moria, and met with the same welcome that greeted Thrór when he returned to Moria: they were beheaded and cast out.

Since then, the Mordor-orcs have returned, and with greater strength. They include in their number mighty Uruks, but also honey-tongued messengers and diplomats to beguile the Orcs who resist Sauron's will. Capturing Moria is key to Sauron's plans; after Gondor falls, he intends to destroy the Elven kingdoms. Lórien shall be caught between the hosts of Dol Guldur and Moria — and if he can recruit the Balrog to his cause, so much the better. The first step, though, is breaking the strength of Malech One-eye.

The chief agent of Mordor in Moria is not an Orc, but a quisling Dwarf named Har (page XX). He is accompanied by a band of dangerous Orcs led by the reaver Naglur (page XX). The Mordor-orcs bear the sign of the Lidless Eye in battle, but conceal their allegiance at other times.

*'That is a very interesting remark', sneered a voice, softer than the others but more evil. 'I may have to report that."*

### MORDOR-ORC STRONGHOLDS

The chief stronghold of the Mordor-orcs is the **Mountain Galleries** (page XX) above the city proper. From this attic, they climb down to infiltrate the city below.

## *Messenger of Lugbúrz*

An emissary of the Shadow, the Messenger of Lugbúrz is always on an errand for the Eye, be it to spy on Men, Elves or Dwarves, or to rouse all creatures with evil intent in an area.

**MESSENGER OF LUGBÚRZ**
Cruel, Cunning

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 4

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 4 | +1 | 2 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Scimitar 3 (3/16), Jagged Knife 3 (2/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all allies in the fight.

## *Black Uruk*

Large and evil Orcs of great strength, picked from among the fiercest to act as lieutenants, bodyguards or chosen warriors, sent to reinforce a colony of lesser Orcs.

**BLACK URUK**
Fierce, Strong

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 5

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | 1 | 5 | +2 | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Broad-bladed sword 3 (4/16, Pierce), Bow of Horn 3 (3/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Horrible Strength.* If the Black Uruk Soldier scores a Piercing Blow with a close combat attack, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Thick Armour.* Spend 1 Hate to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

## *Black Uruk Captain*

Uruk Captains are hulking brutes with coal-black skin, clad in dark, metal armour, and wielding large, notched blades. They yell their orders with voices so fierce that not even Trolls can ignore them.

**BLACK URUK CAPTAIN**
Cruel, Hardened

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | 1 | 6 | +3 | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Broad-bladed Sword 3 (4/16, Pierce), Bow of Horn 3 (3/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Horrible Strength.* If the Black Uruk Captain scores a Piercing Blow with a close combat attack, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all allies in the fight.

# Dwarves

*The mountain smoked beneath the moon;*
*The dwarves, they heard the tramp of doom.*
*They fled their hall to dying fall*
*Beneath his feet, beneath the moon.*

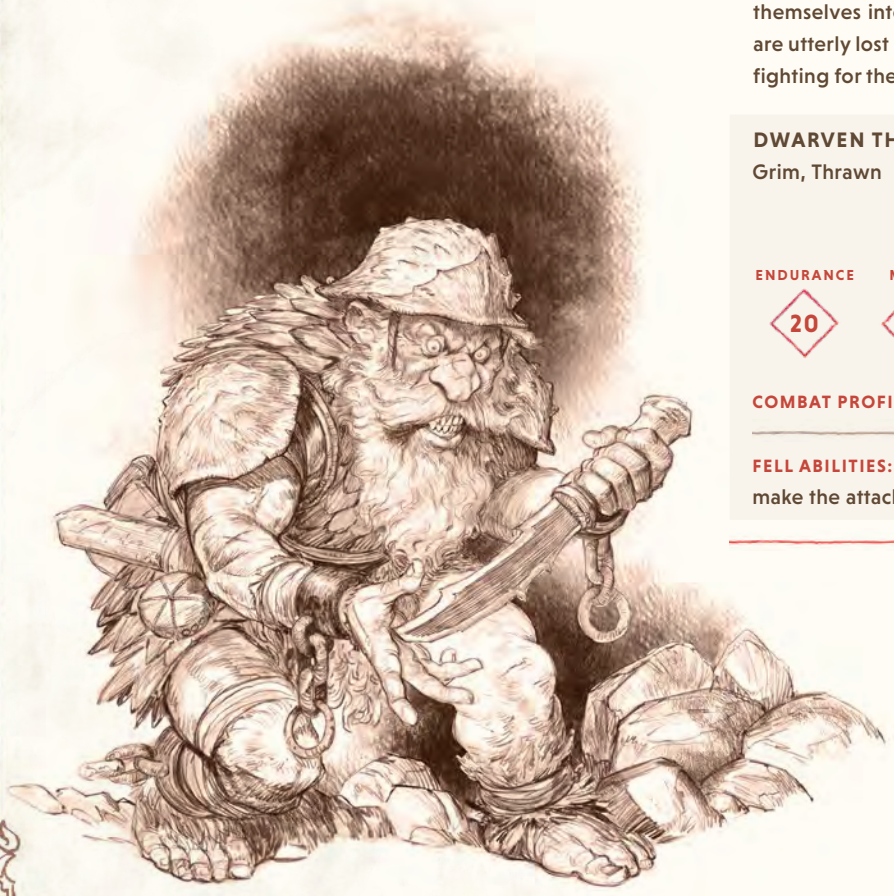
Not all the Dwarves escaped Moria. Some were trapped when the Balrog arose, caught in the lower mines and unable to reach the safety of the surface. These unfortunates were enslaved and tormented by Durin's Bane and forced to labour in the Deeps; their children, born in fire and darkness, have known nothing else but servitude all the days of their sorry lives.

Other Dwarves were added in later centuries by Goblin raiders, for the Goblins prize Dwarves for their smith-craft and strong backs. They force their Dwarven slaves to work in the forges and mines, far from the surface.

## Slave Dwarves

Slave Dwarves suffer from a curious collective delusion — when the horrors of their lives grow unbearable, they imagine themselves back in Khazad-dûm as it once was, mistaking broken ruins for magnificent halls, and imagining crystal lamps driving away the darkness with blazing light.

*'...we have wrought the image of those mountains into many works of metal and of stone, and into many songs and tales. They stand tall in our dreams: Baraz, Zirak, Shathûr.'*



### *Dwarven Thrall*

**The most crazed among the Slave Dwarves even fling themselves into battle for their Goblin tormentors. They are utterly lost in their visions, believing themselves to be fighting for the defence of Khazad-dûm against some foe.**

**DWARVEN THRALL**
Grim, Thrawn

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 5

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | RESOLVE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | 1 | 5 | – | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Jagged Knife 3 (2/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Fierce.* Spend 1 Resolve to *gain (1d)* and make the attack roll *Favoured.*

## Dwarven Haunts

The Doom of Elves is to be bound within the confines of the world until the world's ending; should an Elf perish, their spirit retires to the Halls of Waiting, from whence they shall return again in time. The Doom of Men is to pass from the circles of the world when they die, never to be seen again. The Doom of the Dwarves, however, is a mystery even to the Wise. Some say that Dwarves, who were not part of the Music of the Holy Ones, are fated to return to the stone from which they were made, merging again with the substance of the world, while others hold that the Dwarves shall aid in the remaking of Arda after the end of all things.

Whatever the fate of the Dwarves may be, it is certain that Moria is haunted. Perhaps these are evil spirits in counterfeit of Dwarves, or maybe it's the effect of Dwarven magic spells, or curses, placed as wards to guard their ancient home. These haunts are invisible to mortal eyes, although those who can perceive the other side can see them as shadows that are somehow heavy and substantial, like thick tar. The shadows cling to physical objects, making them more cumbersome and draining the will of the bearer. They may also inhabit rooms or whole buildings, shutting doors, snuffing out torches and holding exits shut.

If challenged by a Dwarf or someone else with sufficient authority or strength of spirit, the haunt can be compelled to manifest as a slimy shadow; in this form, it can be dispelled with a blazing torch or an enchanted weapon.

Dwarven Haunts prey on their victims by burdening them with greater Shadow; those who fall to despair usually develop an obsession with hoarding treasure or with completing some task left unfinished.

**In game terms, when one or more Dwarven haunts are nearby, all Player-heroes gain 1 Shadow point (Sorcery). Those who fail the Shadow test lose 1 point of Hope, and have their Load rating doubled until they leave the haunted area. Player-heroes involved in combat who succeed on the Shadow test must repeat it at the start of each round, until they fail or leave the haunted area.**

*He felt the certainty of evil ahead and of evil following…*

# The Balrog of Moria

*What it was could not be seen: it was like a great shadow, in the middle of which was a dark form, of man-shape maybe, yet greater; and a power and terror seemed to be in it and to go before it.*

The Balrogs are divine spirits, of the same order as the Wizards or Sauron himself; they followed Morgoth, the original and greater Enemy, into evil and corruption. They were Morgoth's chosen servants and warriors, serving him in the same fashion that the Ringwraiths serve Sauron. But unlike the Nine, whose chief weapons are terror and anguish, the Balrogs were mighty in war.

## The Tale of the Balrog

When Eärendil the Mariner sailed to the Uttermost West and summoned the Host of Valinor to war, the Balrogs fought at the siege of Morgoth's fortress at Thangorodrim. The Balrog who would be known as Durin's Bane in later ages fled when the battle became hopeless, escaping the Eagles of the Elder King under cover of unnatural darkness. The creature hid itself in the deepest, darkest gulf it could find, in the tunnels dug by nameless things beneath the mountain Barazinbar.

The Balrogs were tools of Morgoth, and obeyed his will in all things. They had, it seems, little in the way of desire or ambition of their own. Had Morgoth commanded it, the Balrog could at any moment have arisen and conquered Moria, or enslaved the Dwarves and forced them to turn Khazad-dûm into a new fortress of darkness, a new Angband for a new Age — but Morgoth had been cast into the void by the Valar, and could not call his servants. So the Balrog waited.

Above, great empires rose and fell, and the world was utterly changed. Six thousand years it waited, or slumbered, perhaps listening for a summons from its master that never came.

In Moria, the Dwarves delved ever deeper in search of Mithril, until they broke into the chamber containing the Balrog. In a single year it single-handedly brought low the kingdom of Khazad-dûm and the line of Durin, and cast the Dwarves out of Moria. After this spasm of slaughter, the Balrog returned to its place of hiding, and continued to bide its time.

## *Durin's Bane*

The Balrog of Moria is a spirit of the Elder Days; it saw the world being made, and walked in the darkness before the sun ever rose or the stars were kindled. No mortal can hinder it. It can afford to wait until it is summoned once again to war.

**DURIN'S BANE**
Mighty, Terrible

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 12

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 150 | 3 | 12 | – | 5 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Flaming Sword 4 (8/24, Fiery Blow*), Whip of Many Thongs 4 (6/18, Seize), Crush 3 (6/12, Break Shield)

* The attack burns the target, inflicting a grievous Endurance loss from fire.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Deadly Wound.* Wounded targets make an *Ill-favoured* Feat die roll to determine the severity of their Injury.

*Demon of Might.* The Balrog is immune to Endurance loss and Wounds from all sources of injury except magical weapons, and can spend 1 Hate to cancel a Wound from such weapons (unless they have been wrought for the Bane of the Enemy itself). When an attack inflicts damage to the Balrog that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the Balrog is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Dreadful Spells.* When a Player-hero in sight spends Hope, spend 1 Hate to make the Player-hero gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery). The WISDOM roll is *Ill-favoured*, and if the Player-hero fails it or is miserable, the Hope point is lost and all its effects cancelled.

*Flame of Udûn.* When a Player-hero hits the Balrog with a close combat attack, the Player-hero suffers severe Endurance loss from fire damage. The Balrog cannot use this ability when immersed in water.

*Great Leap.* Spend 1 Hate to attack any Player-hero, in any stance, including Rearward.

*Heartless.* The Balrog is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Horrible Strength.* If the Balrog scores a Piercing Blow, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Thing of Terror.* At the start of the first round of the battle all Player-heroes in sight gain 3 Shadow points (Dread). The VALOUR roll is *Ill-favoured*, and those who fail it or are miserable are daunted and cannot spend Hope for the rest of the fight.

## Unanswered Questions

The Balrog is one of the most powerful entities in all of Middle-earth, of the same order as Sauron the Terrible or the greatest of the Elf-Lords and Ring-bearers — and yet, it leaves little mark on the tale of years, save the dreadful years of 1980–81 when it drove out the Dwarves from Khazad-dûm. What secret signs might hint at the Balrog's purposes?

*'There are many evil and unfriendly things in the world that have little love for those who go on two legs, yet are not in league with Sauron, but have purposes of their own. Some have been in this world longer than he.'*

### WHAT DOES THE BALROG DESIRE?

It is possible that the Balrog has no will of its own, for it existed to serve Morgoth, and now it is only animated by blind, reactive hate — it will strike back at those who trespass in its domain, but has no impetus beyond that. But if you want a more active foe for your campaign then consider:

- **THE DOOR INTO THE VOID:** The Balrog serves Morgoth, and seeks its former master like the Ring seeks to return to Sauron. It is said that the Great Enemy was thrust beyond the confines of the world — but if there is one door in the world, then might not another be made? Might the very foundations of the world be *undermined* if the Balrog digs deep enough?
- **BIDING ITS TIME:** Perhaps, like Sauron, the Balrog intends to conquer Middle-earth — but is waiting for Sauron to try and fail first. Several times before, great hosts came out of the West to thwart the Shadow, but now Númenor is gone and Valinor has withdrawn. Maybe, the Balrog thinks, the West might muster one last effort to defeat Sauron — but after that, there will be nothing to stop the third and final Dark Lord from seizing Middle-earth.
- **RING-SEEKER:** It is curious that the Balrog chose to remain in Moria — not that far from the Gladden Fields, and from Gollum's lair in the Misty Mountains. Might the Balrog have joined the hunt for the Ring? Was the snowstorm on Caradhras that drove the Fellowship into Moria Sauron's doing — or the work of a power closer at hand? Why did the Watcher in the Water grab Frodo first of all the company?

### WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BALROG AND SAURON?

Sauron certainly sensed the presence of the Balrog after it awoke, and may have learned of it even before that. He almost certainly did not sense the Balrog during the Second Age, otherwise he would have awoken it himself. The Balrog hid deep enough that the Valar could not find it; the same precautions would have hidden it from the Lidless Eye until the Dwarves dug deep enough.

Both the Balrogs and Sauron were servants of the great Enemy, Morgoth. The Balrogs were Morgoth's warriors and bodyguards; Sauron his apprentice and lieutenant. It is said that in the War of Wrath, Sauron surrendered and begged the Valar for mercy; when they spared him, he crept away to plot anew, just as he did in Númenor many centuries later. Perhaps the Balrog resented its former comrade's betrayal of Morgoth.

Another possibility — Sauron dared not call the Balrog to his side while he was disguised as the Necromancer of

Mirkwood. If the Necromancer had such a clear connection to Morgoth, the Wise would have quickly seen through Sauron's lies. (It should be noted that the Necromancer fled Dol Guldur in Year 2063 of the Third Age, less than a century after the Balrog awoke, suggesting Sauron was well aware of the danger of being revealed too soon). Perhaps Sauron intended to call the Balrog to Mordor, or at least use it in his war of conquest when the time was right. Just as slaying Smaug prevented Sauron from recruiting the Dragon and loosing dragonfire in Dale, perhaps Gandalf's defeat of the Balrog saved Lothlórien from destruction.

A third option — Sauron knows of the Balrog, but fears it. Without the One Ring, Sauron is a mere shadow of his former self. Perhaps he fears that if he tried to command the Balrog, there would be a good chance it might master him instead. Evil turns on evil, and there can be only one Dark Lord in Middle-earth.

### WHY IS MITHRIL FOUND ONLY IN MORIA?

Mithril is mentioned as occurring in only three places in all of Arda — in the Blessed Realm, on the island of Númenor, and in the depths of Moria. The Blessed Realm is beyond comprehension, but Númenor was dragged up from the deepest part of the ocean. Perhaps Mithril is found only in the uttermost depths, in places where Elves and Men were never meant to go. It is possible that the Balrog blasted a route down into those foundations of stone, and collapsed the tunnels behind it — and, many centuries later, the Dwarves happened upon that same rough-hewn way. Mithril was discovered only in the Second Age, some seven centuries after the Balrog hid itself under the mountain, even though the Dwarves had been digging and mining in the Misty Mountains for many centuries prior. The fortune of Moria may also have contained its doom.

### WAS THE BALROG IMPRISONED — AND IF SO, BY WHOM?

A footnote in the Red Book of Westmarch speculates that the Dwarves *freed* the Balrog from *imprisonment* instead of awakening it. So, who imprisoned the Balrog? Might the creature have locked itself away to hide from the wrath of the Valar, and so it *needed* (or even *called*) the Dwarves to it? Or maybe the Balrog did not hide as cunningly as it thought, and it was pursued from the wreck of Angband by warriors of the West. Perhaps some spirit or High Elf chased the Balrog down, and sealed it away where no-one could find it in the depths. (It should be noted that Celeborn of Lórien intimated that the Elves knew an evil slept beneath Caradhras.)

Of course, there are other and stranger things in the world who hide great strength. The Old Forest, for example, stretched much further east in the Elder Days, and once Tom Bombadil went walking in the hills…

## ALTERNATE BANES

The revelation that Durin's Bane is a Balrog is not going to impress anyone (unless, by some unlikely confluence of circumstances, you have found the one person in all the world who has read enough of Middle-earth lore to understand what a Balrog is and why encountering one is such a significant event, but who has not read *The Lord of the Rings*…). The Player-heroes know there is a Balrog down in the depths of the Mines of Moria, and part of the fun of the campaign is pushing one's luck, praying that *this* roll will not be the one that brings doom down upon the Company.

However, to surprise the Company, or at least undercut earned confidence, consider spreading doubt about the true nature of Durin's Bane. The Bane might be:

- **THE WITCH-KING OF ANGMAR:** The Kingdom of Angmar was defeated in 1975 at the Battle of Fornost; a few years later, he led the Nazgûl in the conquest of Minas Ithil. It is conceivable that he visited Moria on his way south and overthrew the Dwarf-kingdom. The Witch-king is not as physically mighty as a Balrog, but his power of terror would explain how the whole city was abandoned in such haste.
- **A DRAGON:** Dragons like Smaug have always coveted the wealth of the Dwarves — and no Dwarf-hold was wealthier than Khazad-dûm. A Dragon — presumably a wingless beast of great age — might have crawled out of the mines to steal the gold and Mithril of the city.
- **A HORROR FROM THE DEEPS:** Or perhaps the creature that brought ruin to the city was not a Dragon, but a nameless monster from the depths, one of the primordial entities that gnawed the foundations of stone. The Dwarves delved too greedily and too deep, after all…
- **A WEAPON:** Durin's Bane might have been a particular weapon, a sword or axe or knife that slew the Dwarven king. A weapon passed down from Orc-chief to Orc-chief, a symbol of the Orcish triumph over the Dwarves, a symbol to rally the tribes of the Misty Mountains to new atrocities and conquests.
- **BETRAYAL FROM WITHIN:** Alternatively, 'Durin's Bane' might be a metaphor. Was Moria destroyed in civil war or revolt? Perhaps the exiled lords of Belegost and Nogrod, bitter about their reduced standing, turned on the King. Did the Dwarves blame the city's fall on a mythical monster to reunite their folk, rather than admit that their jealousies and rivalries were to blame for the destruction of the city?

# Other Foul Things

*And there were murmured hints of creatures more terrible than all these, but they had no name.*

In the long centuries after its fall, Khazad-dûm has attracted all sorts of living and unliving creatures. The entities described in the next sections are just examples of the horrors that the Player-heroes may encounter when braving the long dark of Moria.

## Ash-wraiths

Evil spirits conjured by the Orcs of Udûn, these wraiths manifest as faintly man-shaped clouds of whirling ash and hot sparks. Left unguided, they swiftly gutter out and dissipate. The Udûn-orcs attract the spirits to guard their temples, or muster great swarms of them when they march to battle.

It's whispered in the slave-pits that creating an Ash-wraith requires a living sacrifice; the victim is hurled into the flames, their flesh is burned away, and all that remains is a tormented wraith. In truth, these spirits are called out of the Void, and never wore a hame of mortal flesh.

*'Ash! Ash and smoke blown away on the wind!'*

### *Ash-wraith*

Sparks from the flame of Udûn, Ash-wraiths are fearsome when encountered in great numbers.

**ASH-WRAITH**
Fierce, Swift

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 4

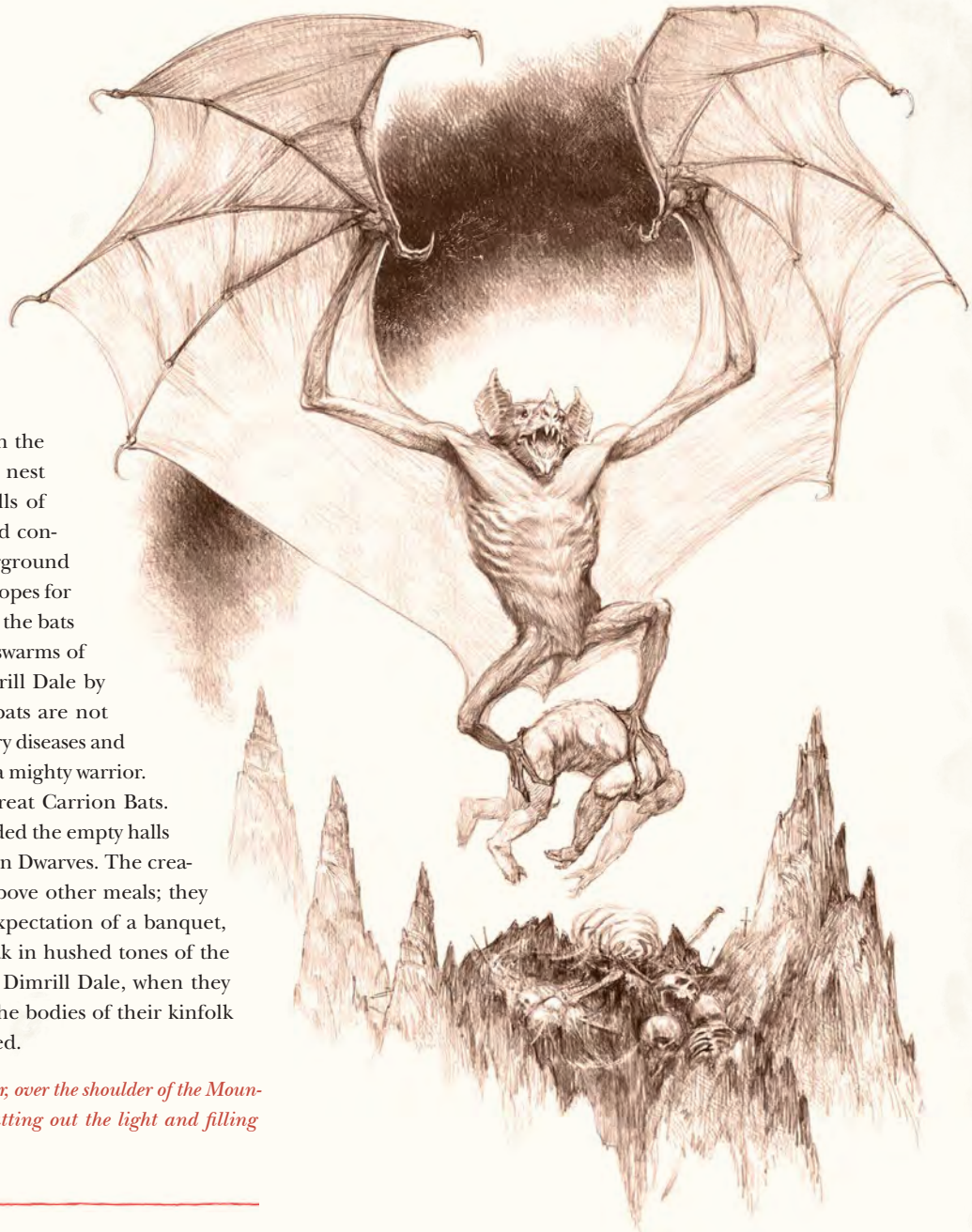
| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 4 | +1 | 1 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Fiery Touch 3 (4/14, Fiery Blow*)
* The attack burns the target, inflicting a severe Endurance loss from fire.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Flame of Udûn.* When a Player-hero hits the Ash-wraith with a close combat attack, the Player-hero suffers moderate Endurance loss from fire damage. The creature cannot use this ability when immersed in water.

*Heartless.* The creature is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.



## CAVE BATS

Bats of many kinds dwell in the Misty Mountains; they are mostly evil beasts, allied with the Goblins. Small long-eared bats nest in the air vents and upper halls of Moria; it may be possible to find concealed entrances into the underground city by searching the mountain slopes for the overgrown cave mouths that the bats emerge from at twilight. Great swarms of tiny bats swirl around the Dimrill Dale by night, hunting insects. These bats are not dangerous, although they do carry diseases and a bite from one can sicken even a mighty warrior.

More impressive are the Great Carrion Bats. When Moria fell, these bats invaded the empty halls and fed upon the corpses of slain Dwarves. The creatures now favour rotten flesh above other meals; they accompany Goblin armies in expectation of a banquet, and some old Dwarves still speak in hushed tones of the awful nights after the Battle of Dimrill Dale, when they had to race the bats to ensure the bodies of their kinfolk were not despoiled and devoured.

*…but the bat-cloud came, flying lower, over the shoulder of the Mountain, and whirled above them shutting out the light and filling them with dread…*

### *Great Carrion Bat*

**Despite their size and apparent strength, Great Carrion Bats favour attacking only weakened or exhausted prey.**

**GREAT CARRION BAT**
Hungry, Swift

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 3

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | 1 | 3 | – | 1 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Fangs 3 (3/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Craven.* When affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, the creature also loses 1 Hate.

*Hate Sunlight.* The creature loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Ghastly Wings.* The creature can attack any Player-hero, in any combat stance, including Rearward.

*Wind-like Speed.* All attack rolls against the creature are *Ill-favoured*.

## MARROW-EATERS

Only a handful of wild tales speak of these creatures; the Dwarves encountered them in the deepest portions of the Mines of Moria, far beneath Caradhras, and only in the last years before the catastrophic advent of Durin's Bane. Perhaps the Orcs have met them in the intervening centuries, but if they have, no tales have reached the surface world.

The Dwarves spoke of thin-limbed creatures, human in size and shape, but with skin like a fish that glimmered with its own pale luminescence. They had great bulging eyes without an iris or pupil, and long sticky fingers and long tongues for sucking fatty marrow from the bones of their victims. They wielded knives of polished obsidian, and never made the slightest sound, but smeared or secreted a glowing liquid on the rocks to draw strange sigils.

*'The River of Gondor will take care at least that no evil creature dishonours his bones.'*

### *Marrow-eater*

Tales insist that the Marrow-eaters have no skeletons themselves, and are able to squeeze through the smallest gap in the rock. Those same tales relate that Marrow-eaters like to capture prisoners and carry them away to their lairs in the depths, so that every scrap of skin, meat and marrow can be savoured...

**MARROW-EATER**
Lithe, Stealthy

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 4

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30 | 1 | 4 | +1 | 1 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Obsidian Knife 3 (3/14, Pierce), Sticky Fingers 3 (1/10, Seize)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Hate Sunlight.* The creature loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

## STONE TOADS

Huge toads may be found in the wet caves of Moria, like the Gardens of Thrym Thistlebeard (page XX). They grow prodigiously large; some are big enough to swallow a Hobbit whole. Their skin secretes poisonous slime, but as the toad ages their hide becomes progressively tougher, until it is hard as stone, with the slime oozing out through narrow cracks.

The Dwarves of old prized these toads, because when a toad grows old enough, a gemstone forms upon its brow. These toadstones have magical properties, especially in the healing arts. Many ancient Dwarven talismans of good health contain toadstones.

*I hope Gandalf will turn you into a spotted toad and fill the garden full of grass-snakes.*

### *Stone Toad*

Stone-toads standing stock-still are almost indistinguishable from ordinary rocks. They are territorial critters, and will rapidly animate to attack those who disturb their underground pools.

**STONE TOAD**
Slow, Stealthy

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 5

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | RESOLVE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 2 | 5 | – | 4 |

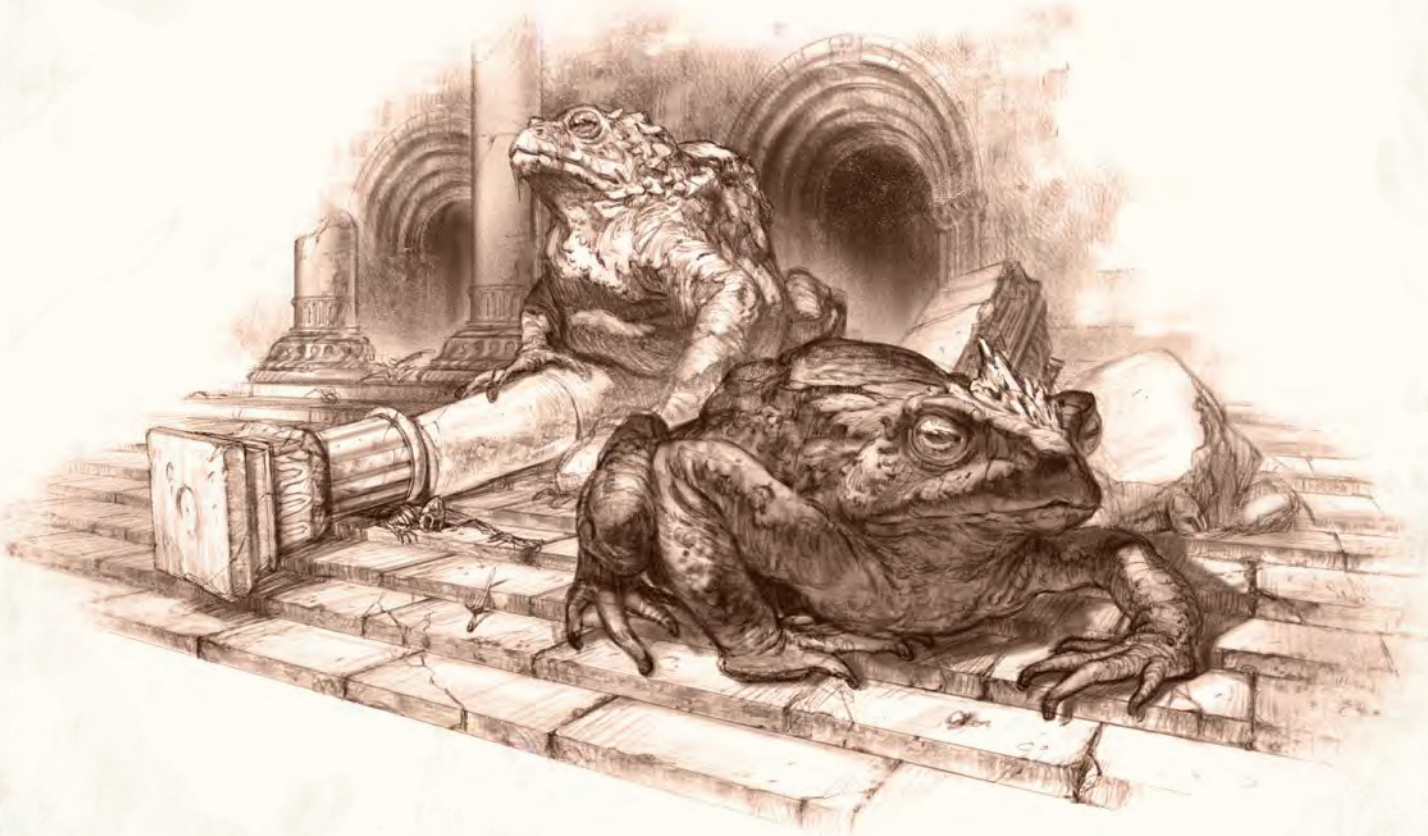
**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Bite 3 (5/16, Pierce), Crush 3 (5/12, Seize)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Great Leap.* Spend 1 Resolve to attack any Player-hero, in any stance, including Rearward.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Stone Toad that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the creature is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Poison.* If an attack results in a Wound, the target is also poisoned (see page 134 of *The One Ring*).

*Thick Hide.* Spend 1 Resolve to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.



## Tappers

Tales of Tappers are as old as the First Hall — and yet, in all that time, no Dwarf has ever laid eyes on a Tapper, and the nature of the entities remains a mystery. They may be spirits, or ghosts, or the product of goblin-mischief, or some subterranean folk from the realms below. They are named for the sound they make, a distant hammering or tapping on the stone that echoes through the underground passageways. One Tapper can be distinguished from another by their rhythm, and each Tapper appears to rule over a particular portion of the underworld. (Tappers, by the by, are not unique to Moria; tales of tapping are told by miners in the mountains of Gondor.)

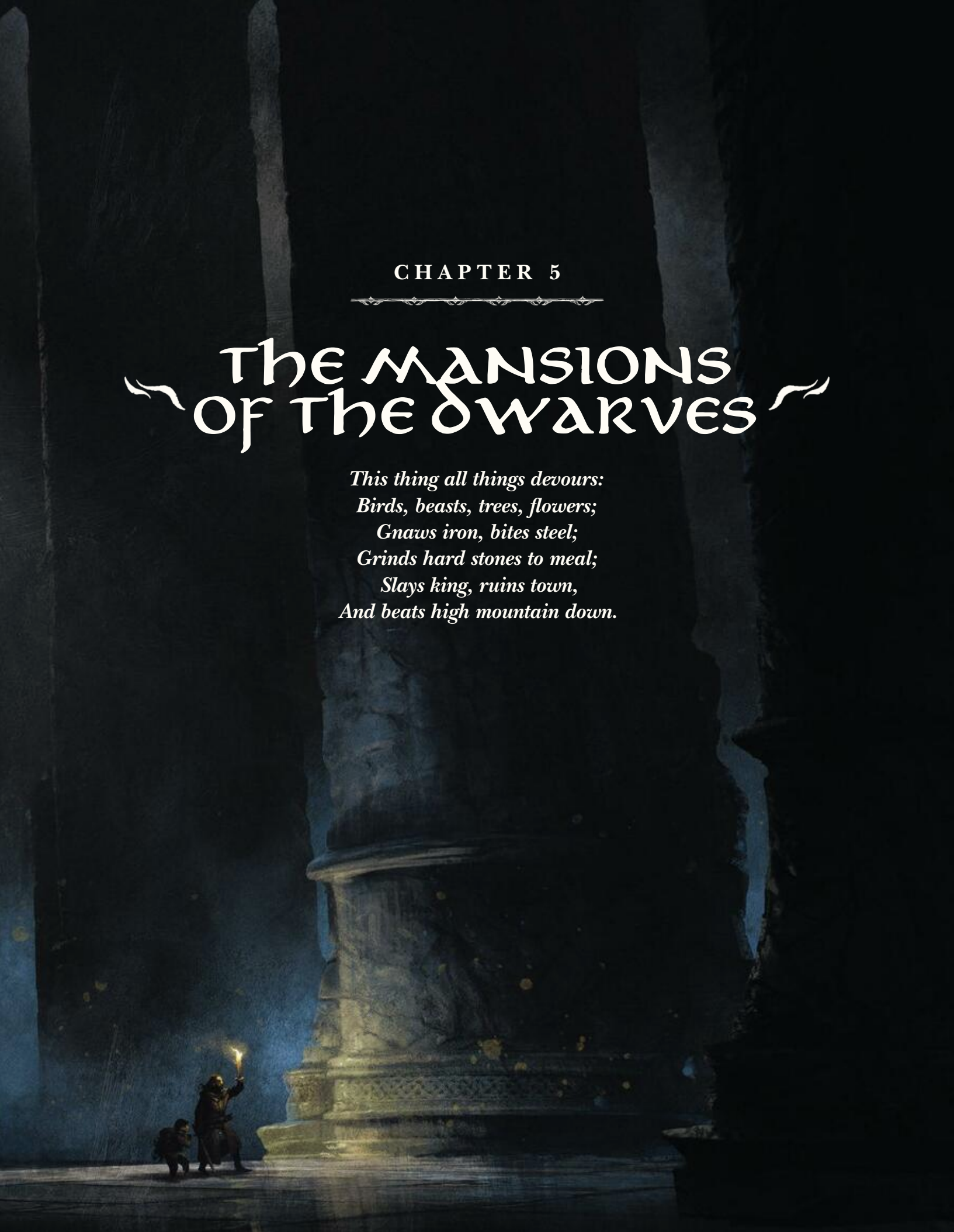
Tappers can be cruel or kindly towards travellers. There are many accounts of Tappers warning of impending cave-in, but there are even more tales of Tappers luring unwary miners or explorers to their doom, or betraying the location of travellers to Goblins. Tappers are said to delight in suitable offerings of food and precious things; some Tappers love songs, tapping along in time to the music, but others despise anything that interrupts the slow rhythm of the tapping.

If a Tapper is well-disposed towards a Company, then those who follow the tapping *gain (1d)* on any AWARENESS, EXPLORE, TRAVEL or CRAFT rolls made while travelling underground. If a Tapper dislikes a Company, then those who follow the tapping *lose (1d)* on the same rolls above, and their Eye Awareness increases by 1.

*Then there came out of the depths faint knocks: tom-tap, tom-tap.*

### CAVE DOGS OF MORIA

Strange hairless dogs lurk in the depths of Moria. Their ancestors were guard dogs, turnspit-dogs, ratters, but now they are all one breed, one pack. They never bark, but instead make high-pitched yelps. While the dogs are no threat to a party of adventurers, they are opportunistic scavengers – they might follow the heroes to eat any Goblin-carcasses left behind, or attack a lone wounded hero. The chief danger of the dogs, though, is that their blind snuffling and yelping may attract more Orcs.



CHAPTER 5

# The Mansions of the Dwarves

*This thing all things devours:*
*Birds, beasts, trees, flowers;*
*Gnaws iron, bites steel;*
*Grinds hard stones to meal;*
*Slays king, ruins town,*
*And beats high mountain down.*

The Mines of Moria are vast and intricate, beyond the imagination of anyone who set foot in them after the Dwarves deserted the underground city.

This chapter describes in some detail the various districts of Khazad-dûm and the surrounding regions. The guide retraces Durin's path, beginning with the Dimrill Dale in the east where he found Mirrormere and built his first hall, and then following the expansion of the city west.

# The Delving of the Dwarves

*'Some spoke of Moria: the mighty works of our fathers that are called in our own tongue Khazad-dûm…'*

Moria is vast and ancient. The first tentative carving of stone was made thousands of years ago, and the work continued up until Durin's Bane awoke. The Dwarves, of course, esteem tradition and the ways of their forefathers, but they are also cunning and innovative. As the skill of the Dwarves grew — and especially after they discovered *Mithril* and had the friendship of the Elves of Hollin — their ambition increased in lockstep, and they built ever more wonderful palaces in the caves.

Dwarves cherish stone as a living thing, tending to it like Ents herd trees. The city follows the grain of the mountains, incorporating natural caves and folds of rock into its structures. Where the stone permitted regularity, the Dwarves built corridors so straight and level that the keenest instrument could find no deviation; elsewhere, the passages twist to follow the courses of vanished rivers. Much of the city leaves the natural rock intact in places, a hallway giving way to a lightly worked cave, which in turn gives way to another hallway.

The older parts of the city are simple and austere, with low ceilings, sconces for candles or burning torches, and few statues. Durin marked the Mirrormere with a simple pillar of stone, and his followers emulated his restraint. As the wealth and number of the Dwarves grew, their art grew more complex. They covered every inch of their new halls with runes, carvings, and bas-reliefs, and adorned these with gems and gilt. Much of the middle city is richly decorated — or was, before the Orcs defiled it. It was in this time, too, that the Dwarves turned to building larger halls and structures within the mountain; great works of engineering were accomplished in those years, as the city grew to house the refugees from Belegost and Nogrod.

The third major phase of Dwarven artistry was influenced greatly by the Elves of Hollin — in this era, the Dwarves learned secrets of light and crystal, and were taught to love nature and growing things. Smiths made blossoming flowers

of beaten gold; masons carved pillars like trees of stone, and glorious lamps blazed in the wide halls.

In the middle years of the Second Age, the Dwarves grew suspicious and fearful, for the power of Sauron was growing. This fear seeped into their work — the parts of Moria built after the Year 1,600 or so of the Second Age are full of traps and secret ways, and favour defensive strength over beauty.

After the defeat of Sauron and the rise of Númenor as the great power, the Dwarves continued to turn inwards, preferring to replicate the works of old and focus on Dwarven custom rather than be influenced by outsiders. This dark phase ended after the War of the Last Alliance and the birth of the Third Age, when for a time it seemed that evil had been defeated in Middle-earth.

The latter portion of Moria's history, then, was an age of trade and commerce with Men, when the road through Moria was a link between the North Kingdom and South Kingdom. As Arnor collapsed and Gondor dwindled, though, the Dwarves again turned inwards, believing that a new time of darkness was inevitable as the strength of Angmar grew. The Dwarves blamed the plague of 1636 on outsiders, causing them to further close Moria to strangers. The plague so diminished the already-declining population of the city that many sections of the Dwarrowdelf were forever abandoned.

## Levels and Deeps, Halls and Gates

All distances in Moria are reckoned from the East-gate on the First Level. Floors below the East-gate are referred to as 'Deeps' (hence, the Third Deep is three floors below the East-gate). Floors above the East-gate are called Levels (so, the Seventh Level is six floors above the East-gate).

The Halls are numbered in order of construction. The East-gate opens into the First Hall, where Durin first began to build. The next hall built was the Second Hall, and so forth. This means that the number of a hall does not necessarily imply anything about its location — the Sixteenth Hall and the Seventeenth Hall were both built around the same time, but are in completely different parts of the city.

Key passageways within the city are guarded by fortresses called Gates. The Dwarves built these Gates so that any invading force would be forced to besiege each Gate in turn to advance through the city, a defensive innovation copied in the fortresses of Minas Anor and Minas Ithil when they were built. The internal Gates were never tested in battle until Durin's Bane arose, and they were unable to withstand the Balrog's fury — although they did endure long enough for many Dwarves to flee to safety.

## Wind and Water, Light and Food

Many great rivers and little streams are born in the Misty Mountains. The Dwarves dug channels and aqueducts through their caverns to direct and harness these waters. They drained flooded chambers, and set fast-flowing rivers to work turning mill-wheels. When Moria was at its height, the city was full of wells, fountains and drinking troughs, as well as storage tanks and cisterns — the waterworks of Khazad-dûm were a wonder indeed.

The Dwarves also dug shafts for air. The entrances to these shafts are mostly high in the mountains, and are located where the natural flow of the prevailing winds drives fresh air into the mouth of the passageway. In some places, huge mechanical fans pushed the air yet deeper into the mines, or huge fires were lit to cause the air to circulate. Other vents pulled smoke and fumes from the forges out of the deeps; when the foundries of Moria were working at full blast, the snows of the Misty Mountain turned black with soot.

For light, all the great halls and passageways of the city had enchanted lamps of crystal; smaller chambers had torches or blazing fires to illuminate them. In a few places, close to the surface, cunningly hidden windows let daylight in, and the Dwarves used polished mirrors to bring the light deeper into the mountain.

For food, Moria relied on farms in Dimrill Dale and in Hollin. Flocks of mountain sheep and goats grazed on the foothills of the Misty Mountains. The city was famed for its great storehouses, and for the Dwarves' skill in preserving food, which kept Moria well stocked even when bad winters made the mountains impassable. Moria's population was never as numerous as the size of the city suggests, and busy Dwarves can forget to eat for days at a time.

## Ways In and Out

The East-gate of Moria is famous (or infamous, after the foul treachery of Azog) and easy to find. The old Dwarf-roads may be lost beneath the grass, but their arrow-straight courses can still be followed, and all lead to Moria. The West-gate to Hollin is hidden, of course, but the Dwarves still recall its existence.

There were other, lesser doors both East and West, but most were sealed long ago. Some have been opened again; others are lost or destroyed (and even Dwarves cannot always find their secret doors again if they lose them). Explorers might also gain entrance via the air-shafts, natural caverns, Goblin-tunnels or other secret ways.

In short — there are many ways in, but only the East-gate is easy to find. Other routes must be discovered.

**ENTRANCES BY LANDMARK TABLE**

| LOCATION | LANDMARK | REGION | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Gates | The East-gate of Moria | Dimrill Dale | The only known way into Moria |
| The Dimrill Door | The Dimrill Stair | Dimrill Dale | Requires a secret key held by Mordor-orcs |
| The Side Door | Mountain Galleries | The Mountains of Moria | Open, but watched by Mordor-orcs |
| Tarloch's Barrow | Tarloch's Hall | The Mountains of Moria | Forgotten by all |
| The High Cistern | Mountain Galleries | The Mountains of Moria | Less of an entrance, more of a deathtrap |
| The Secret Cleft | Mountain Galleries | The Mountains of Moria | Leads to the Endless Stair |
| The Mountain Stair | The Citadel of Barazinbar | The Mountains of Moria | Virtually inaccessible |
| The Doors of Durin | West Moria | West Moria | Speak, friend, and enter! |
| The Under Warren | Goblin Village | The Deeps | Connects Moria to Goblin Town |
| Thrym's Cleft | Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard | The Dwarrowdelf | Discovered by Taentirith the Eagle |

## Landmarks of Renown

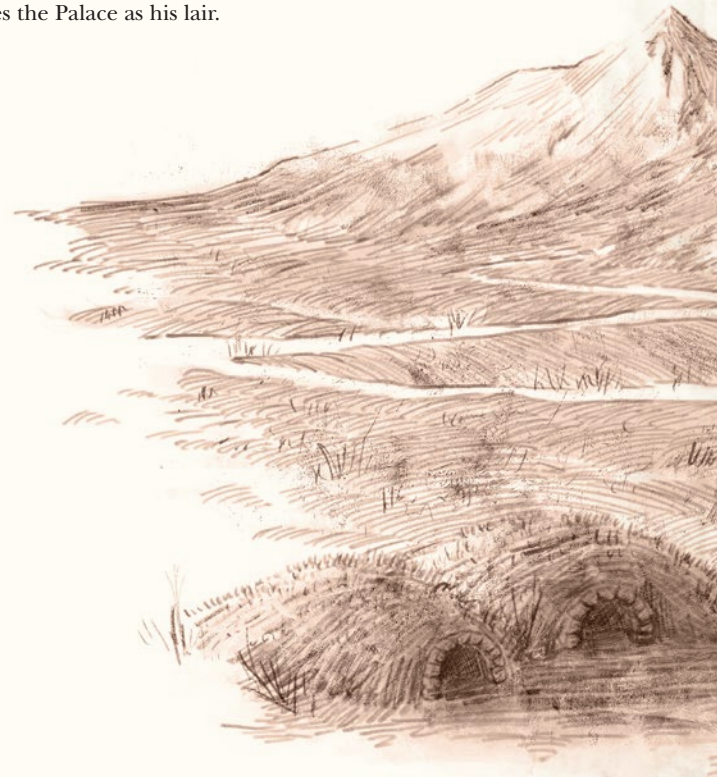
Khazad-dûm is a sacred place to the Dwarves, the ancestral hall of their people. Let the Men of Gondor count their lineage back to the Kings of Old or even drowned Númenor — the Dwarrowdelf is older still. Every Dwarf in Middle-earth is taught about the lost city of Moria, of the deeds of Durin and the works of their forefathers.

In game terms, this means that some of the Landmarks in this chapter are known by every Dwarf — tales of the Mirrormere or the Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard have been told and retold for thousands of years. We refer to these as **Famous** landmarks. Any Dwarf, or any other Player-hero scoring a successful **LORE** roll, knows about these — and knows roughly where they lie in Moria.

On the other hand, some Landmarks are **Obscure** — they were never exactly secret, but after a thousand years they have mostly been forgotten. A Company exploring Moria may happen upon them by chance, but information about them can also be discovered by a Player-hero choosing the *Research Lore of Moria* undertaking during the Fellowship Phase. An example of this sort of Landmark is the Mountain Galleries (page XX) — the Player-heroes might learn of these forgotten halls through Old Lore (see above), or they might follow the path up from the Redhorn Gate (page XX) and come upon them that way.

Finally, other Landmarks are **Hidden** — their location or even their very existence was kept secret, or it was never known to the Dwarves in the first place, or they were made more recently. These Landmarks can only be discovered through adventuring, and then only if the Player-heroes find some clue pointing that way, or by the intervention of the Loremaster.

Note that even a Famous Landmark may have secret aspects. Also, the current status of a Landmark can only be discovered through adventuring — the Palace of Stairs is an Obscure Landmark, a minor Dwarven palace according to the Annals. Nobody outside Moria knows that Malech One-eye uses the Palace as his lair.



# The Dimrill Dale

*To the east the outflung arm of the mountains marched to a sudden end, and far lands could be descried beyond them, wide and vague. To the south the Misty Mountains receded endlessly as far as sight could reach… in places, there were ruined works of stone beside the path, and mounds of green topped with slender birches, or fir-trees sighing in the wind.*

Azanulbizar, the Dwarves call it. Nanduhirion, to the Elves. Dimrill Dale, in the common tongue. It has many names, for this place was once a crossroads in Middle-earth.

The stony valley of the Dimrill Dale is empty now, but it was not always so. When Durin first came here, it was a thickly wooded valley, and he wandered among the trees until he found the cave mouth that he would make into Moria. In the years after Durin's days, the Dale became part of the city. There were houses here, and fortifications, but also grand plazas, marketplaces and fairgrounds for visitors and traders from afar. A grand road ran through the Dale, past the town of Dwarrowhall and off to the crossings of the Anduin and the Dwarf-road that ran through Mirkwood (or Greenwood the Great as it was in those days).

The Dale was never especially fertile — herds of animals grazed here, once, and a few wild cattle and goats can still be found today. It was further down the mountain slopes, in the Nether Vales, where the Dwarves grew most of their food with the help of Men of the Anduin Vales. The Dale was a valuable source of timber, though of course the Dwarves never laid axe to the trees of Lothlórien (and there are other groves they never dared cut, on the shoulder of Redhorn above the Dimrill Stair).

In later years, war came to Dimrill Dale. First, there was the siege of Khazad-dûm during the War of the Elves and Sauron, when the forces of the Enemy laid siege to the city. The Gates of Moria never fell, but Sauron's hosts tore down all that they could reach, and destroyed the surface buildings. The fortress of Dimrill Watch was rebuilt, but the Dwarves never again dwelt in the sunlight of the Dale, and grass grew amid the shattered flagstones of the plazas.

### THE CROWS OF DIMRILL DALE

*Weeping, Nár fled down the Silverlode, but he looked back once and saw that Orcs had come from the gate and were hacking up the body and flinging the pieces to the black crows.*

The crows of Dimrill Dale are hateful things. They nest in the dark thickets of Redhorn, and flap down to croak mournfully at intruders in the vale. Worse, they have a taste for Dwarf-flesh, and so have become spies and allies of the Orcs. The crows have learned a few words in the Black Speech, and warn the Orcs of approaching danger.

After the abandonment of Khazad-dûm, the Dale acquired an evil reputation. Men still came here to cross the mountains by the Dimrill Stair or to search for treasure in the silent halls, but over the centuries they forgot who built the stair, or that the black pit was ever anything but a place of horror. The Dwarves remembered, of course, and still came here on pilgrimage to the doors and to Mirrormere, until the growing number of Orcs made visits to the Dale perilous.

Then came the unforgivable insult, when the Orcs murdered King Thrór and defiled his body. That cruel deed began the terrible War of the Dwarves and Orcs, which was fought all along the Misty Mountains, but ended here in the Battle of Azanulbizar. The Dwarves won, and Azog was slain, but the Dwarves dared not advance beyond the shadow of the Gate. They burned their dead and departed, leaving the Dimrill Dale empty once more.

Today, the Dimrill Dale is eerily empty of wildlife. There are some wild goats and sheep on the upper slopes, and large and sinister rats scurry through the rubble in the lower valley, but a traveller could cross the Dale and climb the Stair without seeing another living thing save the distant circling of birds.

Before the Battle of Five Armies, great packs of Wargs gathered here (though never within bow-shot of the border of Lórien!). Their numbers were diminished for a time, but in recent years the Wargs have returned. The beasts will not pursue travellers up the Dimrill Stair, but anyone following the old road up to the Gate risks being attacked.

Dimrill Dale is almost treeless — the last forests of the Dale, including the copse where Thorin Oakenshield won his name, were cut down to make funeral pyres — but there are a few ancient twisted trees on the slopes of Caradhras. These old thickets are dark and unwholesome, and the trees there are so deep-rooted in the frozen soil that the Dwarves could never dig them up.

The mountain wind howls in the crumbling stairs, and grass grows over the stones. This valley, which was once filled with song and the chatter of the marketplace, which was once filled with battle-shouts and the cries of the dying, is silent once more.

But still a crown of stars appears, in dark and windless Mirrormere.

## *Mocker Crawe*

Mocker Crawe is the oldest and biggest of the crows who dwell in Dimrill Dale. Big enough to carry off a lamb (or snatch a baby from a Woodman's crib), he has learned the speech of Men and Orcs. Crawe is a cunning monster – he pretends to be an honest messenger, carrying word between the Orc-tribes of the mountains and Dol Guldur,

and even flying as far as the Brown Lands to meet with messengers of Mordor, but he twists the messages to benefit himself. He plucks secrets like eyeballs, and manipulates events to his advantage. He sometimes even pretends to befriend Men, bringing word to the Woodmen to warn them of Orc attacks. When the Company enters the Dimrill Dale, he might present himself as a friend of the Dwarves of old, like the ravens of the Lonely Mountains, before luring them into a trap.

Crawe loves shiny things, especially jewels and gemstones. His nest — hidden high among the fir-trees — is like a tiny dragon's hoard, and contains a king's ransom in emeralds and rubies. Anyone who tries to climb that tree gets mobbed by Crawe's many sharp-clawed offspring.

He also delights in mocking his enemies; he flaps among the treetops, cawing satirical rhymes and poking fun at misfortune. Unwisely, Mocker Crawe is as likely to mock the efforts of Orcs as he is to turn his cruel tongue on Player-heroes — anyone who fails embarrassingly at a task gets mocked by the crow.

The one thing Crawe dares not mock — the one thing he truly fears — is the Eagles. He would do anything to get rid of the Great Eagles who have occupied 'his' valley.

He nests amid the ruins of the Citadel of Barazinbar (see page XX). Sometimes, he invites travellers to "visit him in his parlour"; Mordor-orcs wait there.

**MOCKER CRAWE**
Cunning, Greedy

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 2

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1 | 2 | +1 | 1 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Beak and claws 3 (2/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Craven.* When affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, the creature also loses 1 Hate.

*Ghastly Wings.* The creature can attack any Player-hero, in any combat stance, including Rearward.

*Mock.* When a nearby Player-hero fails any roll, spend 1 Hate to make them gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery).

*Wind-like Speed.* All attack rolls against the creature are *Ill-favoured*.

# The Dimrill Stair

– famous –

*At the head of the glen a torrent flowed like a white lace over an endless ladder of short falls, and a mist of foam hung in the air about the mountains' feet.*

*'Yonder is the Dimrill Stair,' said Aragorn, pointing to the falls. 'Down the deep-cloven way that climbs beside the torrent we should have come, if fortune had been kinder.'*

### RUMOUR

*"There's a pass over the Misty Mountains near the ruins of old Moria. It's called the Redhorn Pass. Though steep, it's often easier in summer than the High Pass — and you don't have to pay the tolls demanded by the Beornings. But there are Orcs there, and worse than Orcs, so be on your guard. The way to the pass from the east is up past the waterfall."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Dimrill Stair is the name of the sequence of waterfalls that cascade down the slopes of the mountains and feed the Silverlode. A narrow path leads up the steep slope, and in days of old the Dwarves built a stair there to reach the pass. The Dimrill Stair is still a sacred place to the Dwarves, for it is one of the few works of the Moria-masons not lost to darkness."*

## Background

In ancient days, Dwarves traded with Elves and Men of Eriador via the Redhorn Pass. The pass had many dangers, even in the good years when Orcs were rare, but the eastern approach was always difficult. The Dwarves built a series of paths and steps up the Dimrill Stair, intertwined with the roaring waterfalls, making the pass easier to traverse. With easier travel came more trade, and the prosperity of the Dwarrowdelf grew. The stair became a monument, adorned with images of Dwarven

heroes; carved arches and colonnaded walkways made the pass into a grand road.

Later, the Dwarves delved the long straight road under the mountain, and built West Moria, and there was no longer any need for travellers to take the Redhorn Pass. The Dimrill Stair has seen little use for centuries, and the constant fury of the waterfalls wears away even Dwarven stonework. Yet still it endures, a testament to the craft of the Dwarves — and a promise that greater wonders still lie beneath the mountain.

## LOCATIONS

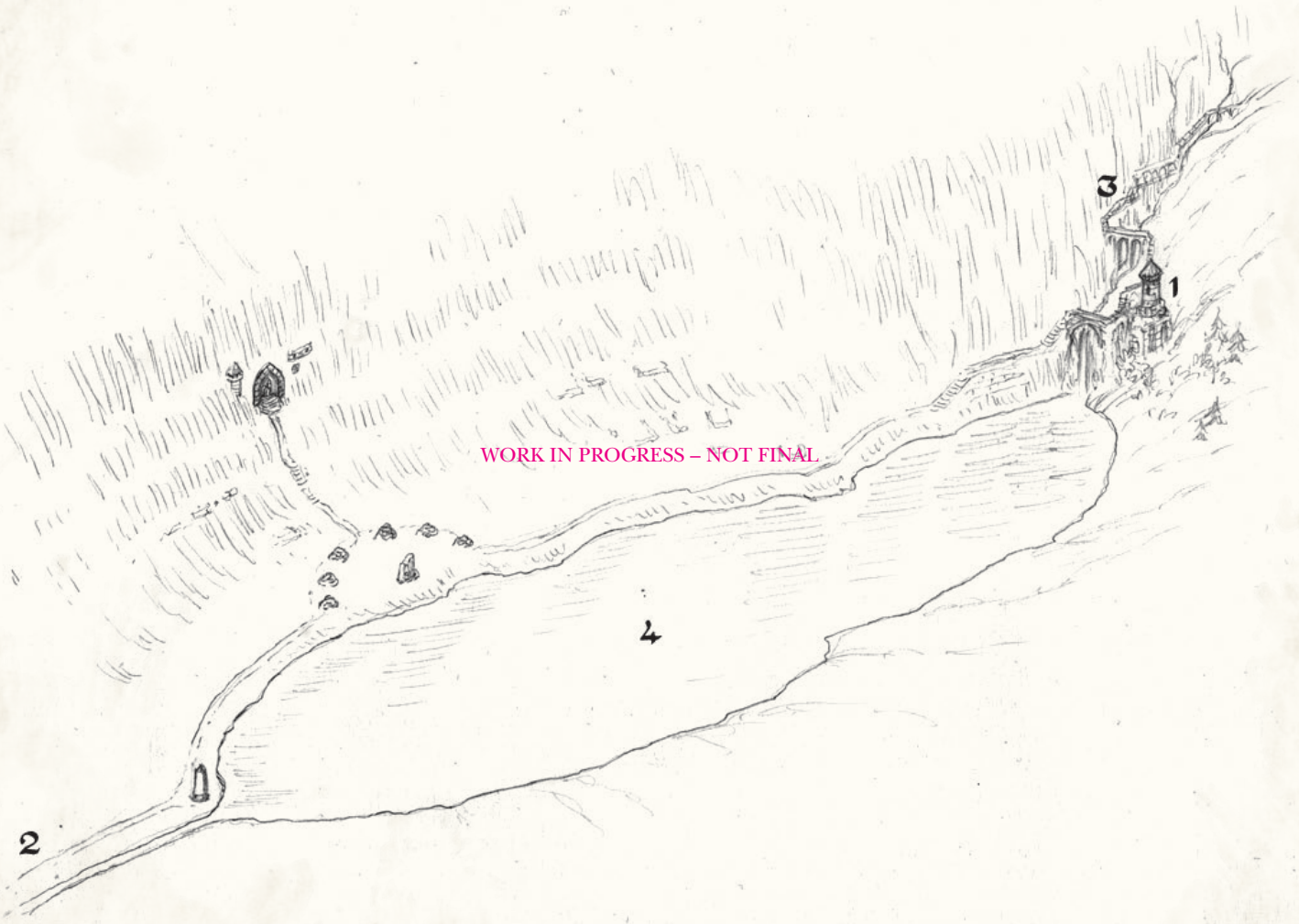
### 1. DIMRILL WATCH

The fortress of Dimrill Watch was once a much larger fortification, as its extensive foundations attest, but it was destroyed in the Second Age and only partially rebuilt. That reconstruction was a thousand years ago, so what remains today is mostly tumbled down and overgrown. The fortress has long since been stripped of any useful equipment, and the secret tunnels that connected it to the city were destroyed thousands of years ago, but the bones of this place are strong.

At times, Men have dwelt in the ruins of the fortress and in the city of Dwarrowhall — kinfolk of the Rohirrim and the Woodmen as they migrated along the Anduin valley. The folk of Tarloch's Hall (see page XX) are akin to these ancient settlers. The Men who lived here used Dwarf-cut stones to build snug little huts amid the rubble, and these are still sometimes used by travellers — or by Orcs, lurking in the shadows and watching traffic on the Dimrill Stair.

### 2. THE DWARF-ROAD

The road to Moria is overgrown, and in places it is hard to tell the stones of the road from random rubble. It runs down the Dimrill Dale, racing the Silverlode, then branches within sight of Lórien. One branch turns north towards the Old Ford;




WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

the other spur continues east, along the forest eaves, until it vanishes in the long grass. Once, the road led to the banks of the Great River; the ruins of a Dwarven port-town have mostly been swallowed by the waters, but the fallen marble pillars of the jetty can be seen sometimes when the waters run clear.

### 3. THE DIMRILL STAIR

Many and wild are the waters that tumble from the flanks of Celebdil and Fanuidhol, icy sprays and white torrents dancing down the cliff. These cold streams crash and vanish amid the jagged stones at the foot of the cliff, to rise again as the springs of Kibil-nâla. As they fall, they turn the grey-and-green face of the mountainside into a dazzling spectacle, especially when the light catches the droplets and it seems as though fire falls through the dale.

It is possible, though arduous, to climb the slopes on either side of the stair. The Dwarves of Yore carved steps there, and now a staircase zig-zags up the mountain from the valley floor to the heights above. In places, it runs behind the thundering waterfalls; in others, the Dwarves tunnelled through the stone. The stair has not been maintained for centuries, and is now dangerous. The steps of the winding stair are slick with water or worn by wind, and Orcs lurk in the dark side tunnels.

Still, the Stair is passable. Lonely travellers climb the long stone stairs to ascend into the mountains; they pass ancient statues worn to anonymity by the wind, and may sometimes pause at the mouth of those dark tunnels, and remember.

At the top of the stair waits the long, difficult crossing of the mountain (see page XX for the Pass itself).

#### THE DIMRILL-DOOR

Climb the Dimrill Stair, and at one point you come to an overhang that the Dwarves cut through. Twenty pillars of stone support the massive weight of the mountain overhead, and the waters crash down on the cliff-face.

Count the pillars, and when you come to the 17th Pillar, turn and face the rock wall. There is a door there, hidden by the craft of the Dwarves of old. This was a secret way into Moria, a postern gate that enters into the city below. This door can only be opened by a key. The original key was made of *Mithril*; it was captured by the Orcs, and sent as tribute to Dol Guldur and hence fell into the dreadful hand of Sauron. Many centuries later, it was given to the Mordor-orcs sent to capture Moria. The Mordor-orcs use this secret door to enter the mountain without passing through the East-gate.

The other Orcs of Moria do not know about the door, and most Dwarves have forgotten it too. (But see *Tales from the Lone-lands* for what happens when a Dwarf finds a copy of the key in the archives at the Blue Mountains...)

### 4. THE MIRRORMERE

Dark and windless is the surface of Mirrormere, still as glass. Long ago, Durin looked in this lake and beheld a crown of stars above his head; others who look into the lake see nothing at first, then they see the reflections of the mountains above them, and the night sky, and Durin's crown in the unreachable deeps. The lake does not reflect those who look into it.

The magic of this place is older than the Dwarves, older than Moria. It may be that the lake is a window into the other side, reflecting *invisible* things of spirit rather than visible things of flesh. Perhaps if an invisible wraith passed by Mirrormere, their reflection would be as it is on the other side. Whatever its true nature, the Dwarves revere Mirrormere (Kheled-zâram in their tongue) as a sacred place. A pillar marks the spot where Durin first looked into the lake, and it was the tradition of the Dwarves to come to this place and seek silent wisdom in the deep waters.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLE

### TRAVELLERS ON THE DIMRILL STAIR

While the Dimrill Stair sees less traffic than the High Pass to the north or the Gap of Rohan to the south (not that any of them are especially trafficked in the Third Age, save by Dwarves), a few travellers do use the stair. Rangers and Elves out of Lórien, for example, and a few traders like Morlena.

Should the Player-heroes spend time on the Dimrill Stair, roll a Feat die. On a ᚠ, another traveller crosses the stair at the same time. On an 👁, they encounter Orcs or other foes. The rest of the time, their only companions are the constant murmur of the waterfalls and the winds howling down off Caradhras.

## *Morlena Neverrests*

Morlena is one of a handful of traders who crosses from the still-inhabited lands around Tharbad to visit the folk of the Mountain Hall and the Anduin valley, returning laden with furs and amber from Wilderland to trade for woven cloth and tools in the west. She knows the Dimrill Stair so well some whisper that she is a Dwarf-woman who rejected the ways of her kin, and certainly Morlena is hardy enough to be a Dwarf; neither driving rain nor Goblin nor snow-storm dissuades her from her course.

Morlena has a knack for making allies, not always kindly ones. She has many friends among the Woodmen and the people of Minhiriath, but also she has bargained with the Goblin-tribes of the mountains, with the Giants, and even gives offerings amid the fir-groves to whatever dark powers dwell there. Morlena is not a servant of the Enemy – but neither does she oppose him wholeheartedly.

She has never dared enter Moria, and has a great store of tales about others who made the attempt. Most of these tales are very old, and end the same way – some young hero decides to try his or her luck against the Orcs, or goes in search of the fabled treasure of the Dwarves, but never returns from the Black Pit. However, if the Player-heroes sit and listen to all of Morlena's tales for an evening, they can glean some useful lore about the mines (either *Old Lore* about a Famous Landmark, or a *Rumour* about an Obscure one).

**OCCUPATION:** Trader

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Stout, Wary

### LOST MITHRIL

This is one of Morlena's stranger tales — a year ago, she was guiding a trader from Lake-town west over the Redhorn Pass, when he spotted a glint of metal by the side of the trail. It was a palm-sized bar of cast metal, ready to be melted down and remade into something beautiful. At first, Morlena thought it was silver, but it was too hard and too light. It could only be the fabled Moria-silver — Mithril!

This tale has more questions than answers. Where did the bar come from? Even if it was cast by Dwarven miners a thousand years ago, how did it end up out in the open on the Redhorn Pass? It must have been dropped there recently — but by who?

The Lake-town trader continued onto Tharbad — and was later found floating face-down in the Greyflood. There was no sign of the Mithril ingot. Did it sink into the waters — or was it stolen?

All Morlena knows is that it is dangerous to touch the treasures of Moria. The shadow claimed them long ago, and woe comes to anyone who tries to take them. Still, if the travellers pay her another silver penny or two, she will show them where the trader found the ingot…

What Morlena does not know is that the ingot was dropped by some Orcs of Mordor. The foundries of the Dark Land hunger for Mithril to make Sauron's war machines. More Mithril must be mined or recovered from the old stores — and then smuggled across the River and on to the Black Land. A Company who traced this flow of Mithril would not only strike a piercing blow against the Enemy, but win a matchless fortune…

### WATCHERS AND WAITERS

Moria-orcs use the Dimrill Watch ruins as a vantage point to spy upon travellers on the Stair, as from the stronghold it is easy to spot intruders. The Orcs have a system of signal-drums and horns, and so the watchers in the keep can call to the waiters on the Stair. Travellers may be seized and dragged into the depths if the Orcs are in need of slaves — or dinner.

### SPIES FROM THE GALLERIES

The Mordor-orcs use the secret passage of the Dimrill Door to enter Moria unseen. Travellers on the stair might encounter these Orcs creeping about — and if those travellers should happen to capture a copy of the valuable key, then Naglur would have no choice but to hunt them down…

# The Mounds of Azanulbizar

– OBSCURE –

*In places there were ruined works of stone beside the path, and mounds of green topped with slender birches, or fir-trees sighing in the wind.*

### RUMOUR

*"There are barrows where those who fell in the Battle of Dimrill Dale were laid to rest — but they don't rest soundly."*

### OLD LORE

*"After their grim victory in the Battle of Azanulbizar, the Dwarves stripped their dead of armour and weapons, then burnt the remains with honour. The Orc-corpses, though, they piled in huge mounds and left to rot. These great ossuaries have become grassy hillocks, and mark the edges of the battlefield. The mounds are a corrupt and haunted place, and it is not good to rest here."*

## Background

The Mounds describe a rough semi-circle around the spot where the fighting was heaviest, with a gap facing the Mirrormere. The corpses of the slain Orcs were dragged to these six spots. In the centre of the circle is a stone: a monument erected by the Orcs to mark the site of the battle.

## Locations

### 1. THE ORC-MOUNDS

Grass and a few lonely saplings grow on these great mounds of earth; beneath lie the remains of hundreds of Orcs. The mounds are a dreadful place; any Player-hero who spends the night in the circle of mounds gains 2 points of Shadow (Dread) as they hear whispering from underground, like the rustling of ashes.

### 2. THE CENTRAL STONE

The central stone was dragged out of Khazad-dûm, where once it adorned the doorway into the First Hall (see page XX). The Orcs who raised it as a monument originally painted the sign of Bolg upon the stone (a scimitar). After the Battle of Five Armies, this was replaced with the sign of Gorgol (a severed bear's head, although it takes a keen eye and a certain amount of artistic licence to see the Orcish splatters as a bear head.)

A **CRAFT** roll identifies the stone as being of ancient Dwarven work; if the Company restores it and returns it to its proper place in the First Hall, they all regain 1 point of Hope.

WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

### 3. TIG'S BURROW

A curious wild man named Tig lives in a hole dug into the side of one of the mounds. The entrance to his little lair is concealed by a curtain of earth-coloured cloth and hard to spot, although keen-eyed crows marked it long ago.

#### *Tig the Scavenger*

**Old Tig is a wild man, his hair matted and filthy, eyes bleary, running on all fours sometimes like a beast. He has a dozen holes and caves across the Dale as hiding places. The Orcs cannot catch him – or cannot catch him again, for it is obvious from Tig's scars and twisted limbs that he was a prisoner and plaything of the Orcs for a time. He remembers only a few words of the Common Tongue; catch him on a good day, when his wits are about him, and he might remember a little of his youth too – how he once lived in a great house of stone in the middle of a green wood, but how he was washed away when the waters rose and could never find his way home.**

**Tig survives by scavenging mail and weapons from the ancient battlefield of Azanulbizar; he trades the weapons he finds to merchants crossing the Dimrill Stair, or once he has enough, he bundles them up and makes his way down to the Great River to await the River-folk (see page XX). The weapons Tig sells are rusted and broken, but even an old Dwarven sword is better than the work of most human smiths.**

**Now, it is said that the Dwarves cleared the field of weapons after the battle, to stop the Orcs from salvaging them. No doubt, blinded by weeping, the Dwarves might have missed a few scattered hammers and swords, but Tig's been scavenging and trading here for a decade. Might the old man know some secret path into Moria?**

**(If Tig does know a path, it is through the Mountain Galleries, see page XX. Alternatively, he might be a spy for Gorlakh the Doorwarden, see page XX).**

**OCCUPATION:** Scavenger

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Eager, Secretive

### 4. THE GIBBET

A crude wooden gibbet stands near the fork of the road. It was raised by the Orcs after the murder of Thrór, and they displayed the butchered remains of the king in this iron cage as a warning to the Dwarves and fodder for the crows. After the Battle of Dimrill Dale, the Dwarves put the head of Azog on a stake, but the Orc's carcass they put here, in answer to the insult to Thrór.

Now, there is another body in the gibbet — the remains of an Orc. A close examination of the remains reveals that this Orc bore the sigil of the Lidless Eye. It was a messenger from Mordor, and the word he brought from the Dark Tower met with little welcome in the Misty Mountains. Sauron is not yet so strong that he can command the Orcs of Moria.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR?

The War of Dwarves and Orcs was a bloody conflict. The murder of one of Durin's line was an insult no Dwarf could ignore, and Dwarves from all the scattered settlements in Eriador and Rhovanion, from the Blue Mountains to the Iron Hills, came together to seek revenge on the Orcs. Even if a Player-hero was too young to take part in the war (T.A. 2793–2799), some of their kinfolk certainly did. The first time a Dwarf Player-hero enters Dimrill Dale, ask them to describe what they or their kin did in the war. Did they:

- Heed the call to rally with King Thráin?
- Partake in the scourging of the Goblin lairs?
- Fight at the attacks on Gundabad and Goblin Town?
- Fight at the battle of Azanulbizar?

In that battle, did they:

- Fall in battle? If so, were their remains burnt in a pyre, or carried away by the Orcs?
- Did they fight in the retreat into the woods of the upper Dale? Or were they part of the heroic charge of the Iron Hill Dwarves to rescue Thráin's forces?
- Did they agree with Thráin that the Dwarves should have pressed on and taken Moria? Or did they agree with the other captains that the victory was too costly, and that the time had not yet come to reclaim the lost city?

# The East-gate of Moria

– famous –

*Suddenly before them the Great Gate opened, an arch of blazing light.*

### RUMOUR

*"King Thrór entered Moria by this door, for it was open when he came to it. But Orcs waited in ambush in the darkness within, and slew the King unjustly."*

### OLD LORE

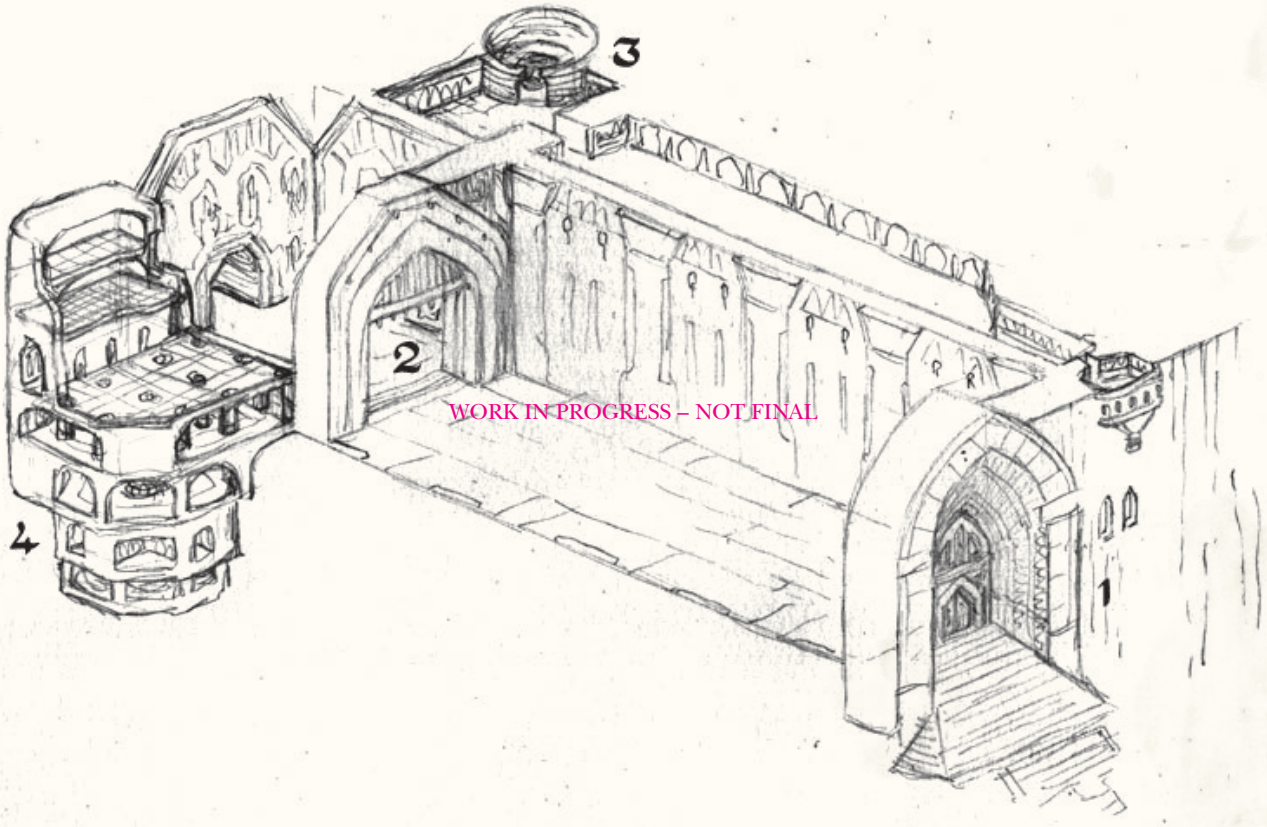
*The East-gate of Moria lies at the end of the Dimrill Dale. No army has ever breached it from outside, and not even the mightiest Dragon or Giant could hope to enter this way. Only from within could Khazad-dûm fall.*

## Background

Even in desolation, the East-gate is a wonder of the world. What was the main entrance to the realm of Khazad-dûm is topped by a tall arch of stone, so huge that it could swallow Ancalagon the Black. The arch is made with huge stone blocks, adorned with runes composing spells of prohibition and exclusion in Khuzdul. Other smaller runic inscriptions in Quenya, Sindarin, the Common Speech, the languages of Rohan and of Dale and Dunland spell out clear commands that 'all should depart who has not the leave of the Lord of Moria'.

Under the arch, two tall windows open in the rock wall, letting the light inside during the day. A flight of huge and age-worn steps climbs to the threshold proper.

Right inside the threshold lies a guardpost where Orcs keep watch. The Orcs carry bows of horn and javelins, and the ground just outside the gates is a muddy morass of pits and concealed stakes to dissuade assault. Foul fumes issue from smoke-pots and Orcish devilry; these fumes are thick enough to blot out the pale sun in winter.

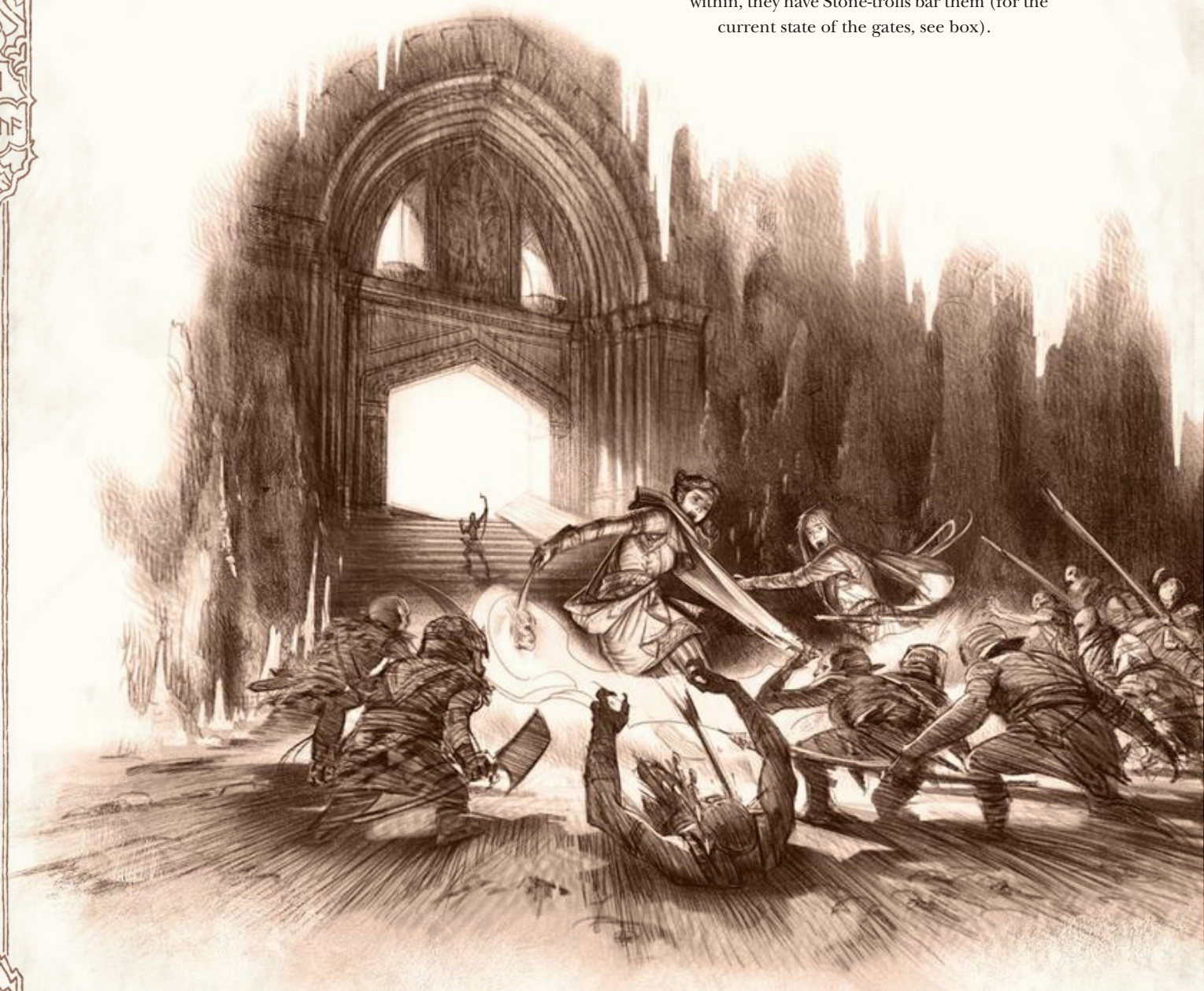



WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE GATES

The gates barring the western entrance to Moria were wrought of iron girded in *Mithril*, and were cunningly made to be so perfectly balanced that a handful of Dwarves could close them with little effort (for the current state of the gates see box). There was a locking mechanism, but it no longer functions; Orc-mischief and the ravages of time have destroyed it. When the Orcs want to keep the gates barred from within, they have Stone-trolls bar them (for the current state of the gates, see box).



### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GATES

The fate of the Gates themselves is a curious matter. In *The Lord of the Rings*, it is noted that *"the gates were shattered and cast down"* when the Fellowship escaped in the year 3019. However, when Thrór II came to Moria in 2790, he found *"the Gate was open."* Does that mean the gates could have been *closed* when Thrór arrived? If so, were the Gates destroyed in the intervening years?

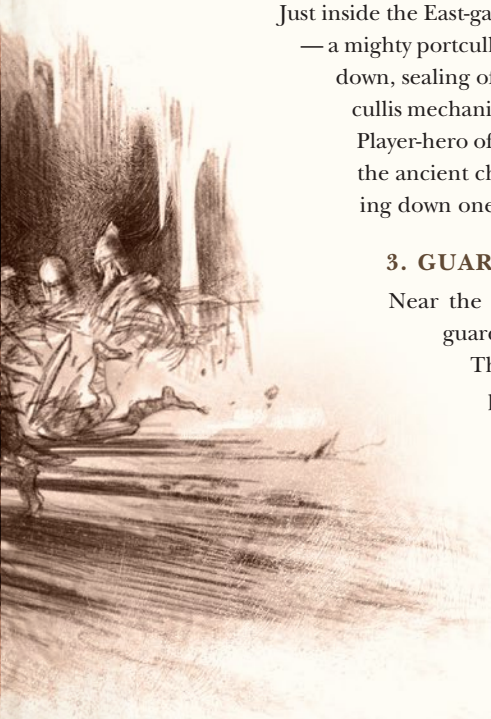
Some possibilities for the Gates of Moria:

- **DESTROYED IN THE RETREAT FROM MORIA:** When the Dwarves fled Durin's Bane, they might have destroyed their own doors from the inside, knowing that if they left their fortress with its defences intact, they would have no hope of retaking it in future. The Orcs later tried to repair the doors, but they lacked the craft and cunning of their makers, and could only prop the Gates up and fill the gaps with debris.
- **DESTROYED IN THE BATTLE OF AZANULBIZAR:** Alternatively, the doors of Moria might have endured until the War of the Dwarves and Orcs, when they were cast down in the battle. The Doors of Durin were wondrously strong, but the Dwarves were wroth. Perhaps they used some cunning siege weapon, or knew a secret spell of unmaking handed down in whispers from one heir of Durin to the next.
- **DESTROYED IN SOME OTHER EVENT:** More intriguingly, what if the Gates were destroyed more recently, in the years between the Battle of Five Armies and the War of the Ring? A small band of heroes might creep in through some secret way and sabotage the gates from within...

Both Aragorn and Gandalf also passed through Moria. Gandalf searched Moria for any sign of Thráin around the year 2845, while Aragorn likely came this way in 2980, on his way back to Rivendell from Lothlórien. Both passed from East to West, so it is likely the East-gate was open or broken when they came this way.

### 2. THE GRAND PORTCULLIS

Just inside the East-gate is a second layer of defence — a mighty portcullis of steel that can be dropped down, sealing off the main corridor. The portcullis mechanism has rusted shut, although a Player-hero of surpassing might could break the ancient chains and bring the gate crashing down one last time.



### 3. GUARD-POST

Near the East-gate is an old Dwarven guard-post, now occupied by Orcs. This guard-post is typical of such places — it is cunningly concealed behind hidden doors, and has tiny spy-holes so those within can watch the nearby corridors and approaches.

If the gate is guarded, then there is a mix of Goblin Archers and Orc Guards (a total equal to twice the number of Player-heroes), plus an Orc Drummer in many cases (see *Orcs of Moria*, on page XX).

### 4. GORLAKH'S LAIR

The Orc Gorlakh is the Doorwarden of Moria. He does not sleep in the guardpost — too many ambitious young Goblins there who might cut his throat — but has a lair near the main gate. His chamber was once a customs-house where Dwarven clerks oversaw the passage of goods through the gate, but all that remains of its former function is the heavy, secure door. In a chest, Gorlakh keeps the treasures and trappings of his office, including the (purely ceremonial) key to the Gate, a few coins looted from Moria — and a bundle of treasure from Mordor, including amulets marked with the Eye.

Gorlakh's henchman is an old Stone-troll Robber called Pic, so old he spends much of his time sleeping (and one of these days may just turn to stone in his bed). His only duties are to barricade the Gate if ordered, and to brutally dismember anyone who tries to steal Gorlakh's treasure.

### *Gorlakh the Doorwarden*

An old Orc of the Misty Mountains, Gorlakh is in charge of keeping watch over the East-gate and the Dimrill Dale. He is adept at moving around by day, and wears a wide-brimmed hat to shade his eyes from the frightful sun. Gorlakh is a clever old monster – he knows how to feed the crows of the Dale, and how to read the shifting clouds to foretell when it will be safe to go outside, and even how to listen to the grumblings of the mountains. He sometimes creeps down to eavesdrop on travellers heading for the Dimrill Stair, to get tidings of the wider world.

Gorlakh is supposed to be loyal to Gorgol son of Bolg, and Gorgol's lieutenant Malech One-eye (see page XX), but the Doorwarden is more far-sighted than most Orcs – he knows the Orcs of Mordor are up in the heights of the Mountain Galleries, and he has heard rumours of the return of the Dark Lord. He wants to be on the winning side, and if that means betraying Malech and allying with the Mordor-orcs, so be it. Maybe that means leaving the gates unguarded from time to time, in the hopes that some adventurers might creep into Moria and stick a sword in Malech's guts...

He hates the Udûn-orcs of the Deeps, and fears that Malech will fall into their madness before long, leaving Gorlakh all alone, caught between *ghâsh* and the sun.

**OCCUPATION:** Doorwarden

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Cunning, Wary

Use the *Orc-chieftain* statistics for Gorlakh, replacing *Great Leap* and *Yell of Triumph* with the *Denizen of the Dark* and *Drums in the Deep* Fell Abilities.

## Schemes and Trouble

### Approaching the Gates

Depending on the needs of your campaign, the gates may be Closed, Open or Broken.

- If **Closed**, then they are quite impenetrable by any methods the Player-heroes are likely to have at their disposal. The armies of Mordor could hammer on the Gates of Moria for a very long time without breaching them, so a few wandering adventurers have no chance of forcing them. The Company must wait for them to open, or find another way in.
- If **Open**, then it is likely the Orcs are expecting visitors. While there are Goblin-tunnels that worm through the mountains, connecting the bowels of Moria with other fortresses like Goblin Town, these routes wind much and are virtually impassable by all but the scrawniest Goblins. It is easier for the Orcs to travel by night, in the open. As Orcs are not known for either their punctuality or their vigilance, the gate can be left open for weeks at a time. An open gate is likely guarded, unless some misfortune has befallen the Doorwarden.
- If **Broken**, then the Gates cannot be shut. Broken Gates are always guarded.

Alternatively, if you prefer to let chance play more of a role, then roll the Feat die to determine the current status of the Gates. If the Player-heroes were spotted by Orc-sentries or other foes in the Dimrill Dale, then roll the Feat die twice and take the lowest result.

**MORIA GATES STATUS TABLE**

| FEAT DIE ROLL | THE GATES... |
|---|---|
|  | ...are shut – the Company must lie in wait until the Orcs sally forth, which may mean waiting until nightfall, or until the moon is waning gibbous. |
| 1–2 | ...are heavily guarded; sneaking in is impossible, and the Player-heroes must fight the Guard-orcs (a double-strength guard-post, so four times as many Orcs as the Player-heroes). |
| 3–4 | ...appear unguarded, but it is a ruse – there are Orcs lying in wait in the shadows beyond the gate. They will attack once the Player-heroes are deep enough inside the entrance to be unable to flee. |
| 5–8 | ...are guarded by a single guard-post worth of Orcs. |
| 9–10 | ...are but lightly guarded, and the sentries are not watchful; the Company can sneak with a successful STEALTH roll. |
|  | ...are unguarded when the Player-heroes arrive. |

### The Fate of Eagles

After the Battle of Five Armies, the Lord of the Eagles sent three of his kind flying south to the Dimrill Dale, to keep watch on the doors of Moria. The three Eagles watch the comings and goings of the Orcs, and have snatched up so many of them and dashed them against the rocks that they

dare not go abroad by day, not even when the clouds shade the sun, lest they be caught like rabbits.

The leader of the trio is Thoradel. Proud and thoughtful, she often soars above the mountain-peaks, seeking wisdom on the west wind. Her companions are Taentirith, a scholarly Eagle who has made a study of all the outcrops and towers of Moria visible from the mountainside above — including the accessible ventilation shafts — and unlucky Padroval. The third Eagle was struck by an Orc-arrow and forced to land amid the mounds. The Orcs caught Padroval in nets and dragged him beyond the Gate.

Thoradel knows her comrade is still alive — she has heard Padroval's cries echoing up from the depths of Moria — but has no way to rescue the hostage. So far, the Orcs have made no attempt to ransom Padroval, and any demand will doubtless be conveyed by the wretched bird Mocker Crawe (see page XX). Thoradel suspects that several groups of Orcs may be squabbling over the hostage, and that they will make a demand only once they have resolved that dispute. There may be time for some bold heroes to sneak in and rescue the eagle…

The eagle is held in a chamber near Gorlakh's lair, guarded by the Troll Pic.

# Old Moria

*Dark yawned the archway of the Gates under the mountain-shadow.*
*Faint and far beneath the earth rolled the slow drum-beats: doom.*

The region of Old Moria is, as even the most dunder-headed Hobbit might very well deduce from the name, the oldest part of the city. Here is where Durin began to labour, in the first days of the Sun and Moon. It is also the part of the city which has suffered most from the depredations of the Orcs — the wretches cluster here, close to the surface and the Gate, and have amused themselves over the centuries by defiling the once-glorious city. It was also here that the Dwarves held out against Durin's Bane for almost a year, and the corridors and halls still bear the scars of that conflict. Flames intense enough to melt stone blazed here, and it is clear that some tremendously strong creature smashed through the defences of the Dwarves.

Even after many centuries, there is a faint, impossible stench of burnt flesh, and the shadows are thick with ghosts. Player-heroes walking through these passageways gain 2 points of Shadow (Dread).

## The First Hall

– famous –

*They ran on. The light grew before them; great shafts pierced the roof. They ran swifter.*
*They passed into a hall, bright with daylight from its high windows in the east.*

### RUMOUR

*"Just inside the East-gate lies Durin's hall, where the Dwarves kept some of their greatest treasures. But the doors were kept locked except on certain sacred days."*

### OLD LORE

*"The First Hall was Durin's Hall. It was here he began his long labours, and dwelt alone for many years. He carved upon the walls his memories of the Elder Days, and it is said he even preserved there his memories of the face of Aulë his Maker. Now, this hall was preserved as Durin left it when he passed into sleep, for it was the belief of the Naugrim of yore that their King was deathless: that Durin would return again in time to come. Thus, it was the custom of the line of kings of the Longbeards to bring their heirs to the First Hall on Durin's Day when they were young; if the beardless boy could interpret the carvings on the walls, he was proclaimed to be Durin reborn. Five times Durin returned indeed, and each time the chosen prince perfectly resembled the ancient carvings of Durin I, and ruled wisely."*

*"Others among the Wise say that the rite was different; that Durin would awaken in his former body, and climb from his hidden tomb to the city above, and that the purpose of the First Hall was to ensure that the resurrected Dwarf was indeed the true Durin and not some counterfeit made by the Enemy."*

### Background

The First Hall of Moria was Durin's Hall, the home of the Father of the Longbeards in the days before the making of the Sun and Moon. The First Hall, therefore, was a blessed place to the Dwarves, a connection to their kings of old. The Hall was tended by hooded priests and scholars, and the carvings of Durin shrouded by veils to hide them from the eyes of the unworthy. (It was a mark of the long friendship between the Longbeards and the Elves of Hollin that, in time, the Dwarves invited their friends to enter the Inner portion of the First Hall and look upon the carven walls.)

At the same time, the First Hall was very close to the East-gate, and thus all traffic entering the city went past the Hall. Durin's Door (3) divides the Landmark between its two functions.

## LOCATIONS

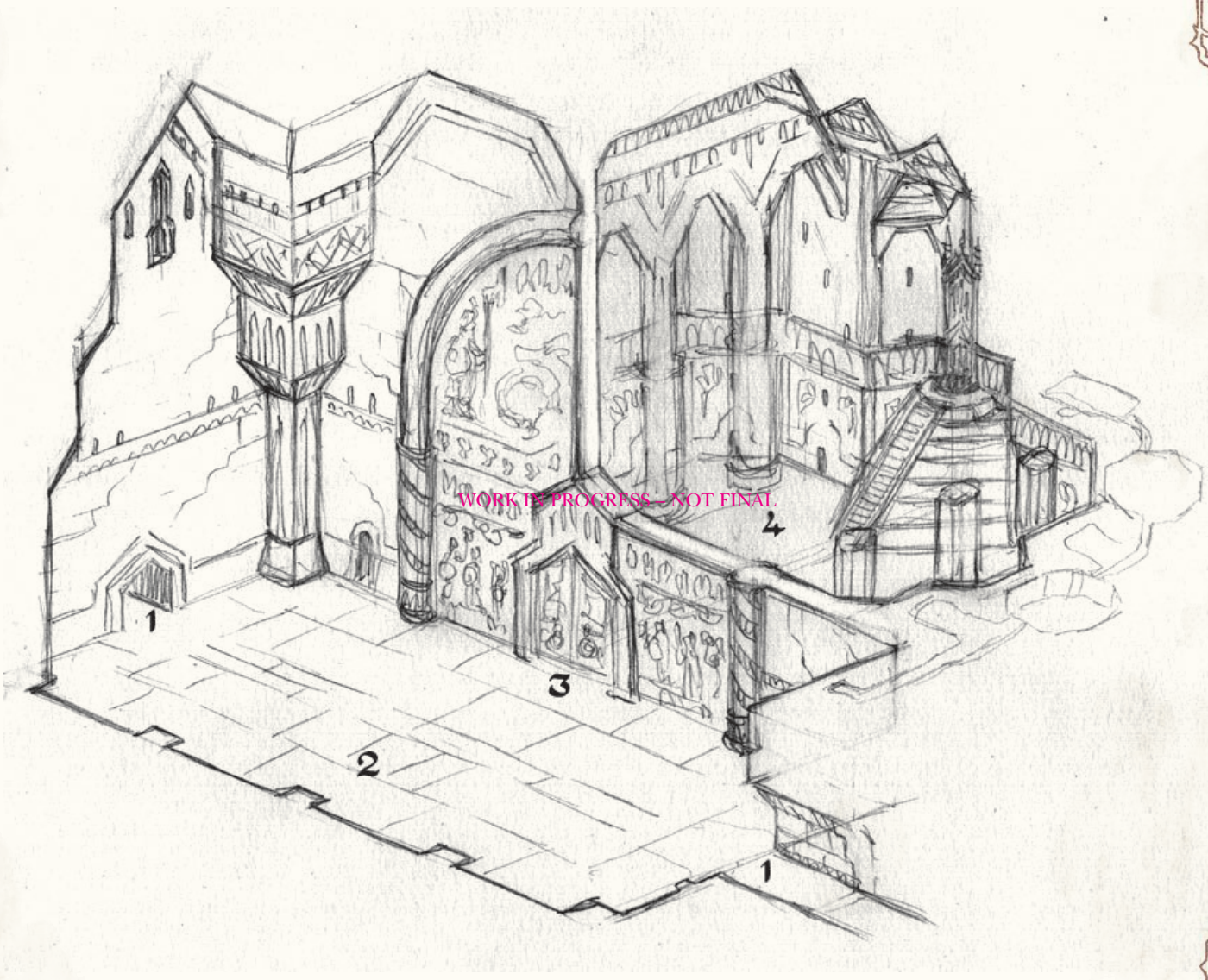
### 1. THE ROAD UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

The main thoroughfare leads straight from the East-gate to Durin's Bridge (see page XX). It is wide and high-ceilinged. Here, close to the surface, it is lit by high windows. Deeper in the mountain, there were lamps of gold and crystal, but now the Road is dark save a glimmer at the east end.

### 2. THE OUTER HALL

This is the portion of the First Hall that the Dwarves permitted outsiders to travel through, in the days when the Dwarrowdelf welcomed visitors. In design it is stark and simple, far less grand than some of the newer halls within. But every mark of chisel and pick is preserved, for they were made by Durin the Deathless.

Only the north wall is — or was — as impressive as one might expect. When the First Hall was divided into Inner and Outer Halls, the Dwarves made the dividing wall into a monument, and it was richly adorned with Ithildin, gold-leaf and other precious things. The images on the wall depicted the deeds of Durin. The Orcs, of course, have despoiled this sacred place, stripping the gold and jewels from the east wall and covering the rest with graffiti or ordure.

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### 3. DURIN'S DOOR

In the centre of the north wall is Durin's Door, a simple portal of stone. Runes carved upon it proclaim for any Dwarf to read that this door can only be opened on Durin's Day. (*"The first day of the Dwarves' New Year is as all should know the first day of the last moon of Autumn on the threshold of Winter. We still call it Durin's Day when the last moon of Autumn and the sun are in the sky together."*)

Yet, a Player-hero scoring a Magical success on an appropriate Skill might be able to open it at another time.

### 4. THE INNER HALL

Once, the Inner Hall was a shrine to Durin, for it was in this hall he dwelt alone when the world was young. The walls once bore carvings made by the Father of the Longbeards, and many pillars support the roof. The coronation throne of the Longbeards still stands at the far end of the hall, but whatever could be taken from the hall is gone. Now, the walls are bare, great slabs cut from them so the carvings might be borne away. The oldest history of the Dwarves is gone.

The sight of this ancient shrine stripped of its fabled carvings might drive any Dwarf to despair — Dwarves gain 1 point of Shadow (Dread) upon entering the Hall.

Inscribed onto slabs near the coronation throne are the names of all the Dwarven kings, from Durin I to Durin V. The last king of Moria, Náin I, was never formally crowned, but some loyal subject hastily scratched his name into the floor next to that of his father — and, curiously, the numeral V, even though Náin was the first of his name. (This is a subtle clue pointing to the lost Fifth Hall and the *Last Redoubt of the Dwarves* — see page XX).

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### THE LOST CARVINGS

When Moria fell, the Dwarves held the First Hall for as long as they could, but when it became clear that the fight was hopeless, King Náin I ordered that the carvings be preserved. His craftsmen cut down the most prized works of Durin, and hid them — but the secret of their hiding place was lost in the confusion.

If the location of the Lost Carvings is to be found anywhere, it might be found in the Last Redoubt (see page XX). The Dwarves there may have left some clue as to where their comrades hid the carvings taken from the First Hall. Did they conceal them elsewhere in Moria, or did they spirit them to safety?

# THE SECOND HALL AND DURIN'S BRIDGE

– FAMOUS –

*Suddenly Frodo saw before him a black chasm. At the end of the hall the floor vanished and fell to an unknown depth. The outer door could only be reached by a slender bridge of stone, without kerb or rail, that spanned the chasm with one curving spring of fifty feet.*

### RUMOUR

*"There is a black pit in Moria, just beyond the First Hall. It has no bottom, and is spanned only by a single narrow bridge. There is no other way into the city save that bridge."*

### OLD LORE

*The rumours are mostly true. Durin's Bridge is indeed the only way across the chasm, although there are secret routes higher in the mountain that bypass the abyss. Knowledge of those hidden routes likely died with the Dwarves.*

## BACKGROUND

The narrow stone span of Durin's Bridge crosses a vast natural abyss, the best defence against any enemy that might capture the First Hall and the outer passages. Durin made it, in the Elder Days, and what spell or art he used to work the stone is lost. The chasm beneath the bridge has never been plumbed and may be bottomless, although if a Player-hero looks down from the bridge, they may see the lights of other openings onto the abyss in the Deeps below.

From the east, the bridge and the chasm are reached by a doorway found at the end of great stairs of stone descending from a wide echoing passage. The Second Hall lies beyond the bridge. In ages past, the hall was a great marketplace,

WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

where traders from the East-gate sold their wares or began the long dark march to the West-gate. There are dozens of side chambers and lesser halls leading off from this cavernous hall– so the Orcs of different factions often clash here, and the passageways are often littered with the corpses of warriors who died in the dark.

### CRIES OF THE PRISONERS

The Orcish prison called the Ledge of Woe (see page XX) opens onto the abyss many levels below this hall. Player-heroes crossing the bridge may hear distant pleas for help echoing up from far below. If the Company enters Moria on a rescue mission, they may hear the cries of those they seek long before they lay eyes on them.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. DURIN'S BRIDGE

The Bridge is so narrow that only one person at a time may walk abreast, and a single doughty warrior (or Wizard!) can hold the span against a host of foes.

In game terms, only a single Player-hero on the Bridge can be in either Forward, Open, or Defensive stance, another (if armed with a Spear or Great Spear) may be in Open or Defensive stance behind the first, and all the rest can (and must) be in Rearward.

### 2. ORC-GUARDS

Orcs encamp on the west side of the chasm, in the Second Hall proper. Their numbers vary; if the Orcs are caught off guard, then there may be only a few bored Goblins here. However, if the alarm has been raised (or an important Chieftain like Malech One-eye is nearby), then they are here in force. They keep Cave-trolls penned nearby, and if intruders attack via the First Hall, these Trolls are forced onto the bridge with long spears and made to fight the invaders while Goblins in the Second Hall loose arrows and hurl projectiles. However, if the Orcs think that there is treasure to be looted, they let the attackers across the bridge, to ensure their corpses do not fall into the abyss.

### 3. THE SECOND HALL

Though the First Hall might fail to awe visitors to Khazad-dûm, the Second Hall is an astounding feat of Dwarven craft, a true wonder of the world. It is wider, loftier and far longer than First Hall, and its length runs westward into darkness. Lines of huge black pillars carved like mighty trees run along it, the tops of the columns disappearing into the dark above (some of the pillars may be hollow, hiding secret stairs or guard chambers). The smooth surface of the floor is littered with debris, but still reflects any source of light like a polished mirror.

The Second Hall is a great crossroads. Not only does the main road lead on up into the Dwarrowdelf (see page XX), and onto the Road (see page XX) but it is easy from here to find staircases that lead up into the Mountain Galleries (see page XX) and down into the Deeps (see page XX).

### 4. THE STAIRS OF SUN AND MOON

One of the lost glories of Moria, the Stairs of Sun and Moon led up from the Second Hall into the city proper. Half the steps were decorated with panels of silver; the others with panels of gold, and light from windows high above made the whole stairway shine with heavenly light. Two sculpted trees — again, one of silver, the other gold — "grew" at the foot of the stairs, and travellers passed under the arch where their branches intertwined.

When the Balrog chased the last Dwarves out of Moria, the heat of its passing melted the Stairs of Sun and Moon; panels and trees alike were reduced to a slag of molten metal that had congealed at the foot of the stairs. Over the years, thieves have hacked away much of this lump of treasure, as the stairs are quite close to the main entrance to the city and thus easily accessible. No Dwarf, though, could look upon the ruin of the stairs without weeping.

### 5. THE SHRINE OF AZOG

In a small room off the Second Hall, forgotten by Dwarves and Orcs alike, is the skull of Azog. The Dwarves stuck Azog's head on a stake after the Battle of Dimrill Dale. Now, the Orcs do not venerate their dead. Carcasses are stripped of any useful gear, then thrown aside — or in the stew-pot, but they recognise the power of hate. Thus, the head of Azog was preserved, complete with the pouch of coins he had flung at Thrór's servant Nár, all those years before, and that the Dwarves had thrust into its mouth after his death. They placed it in this little side room, on top of a broken pillar, and today it is still there, a grisly monument to the inextinguishable hatred running between Orcs and Dwarves.

Azog, though, was a Great Orc, a thing of terror. His malice seeped into the stone, and now this chamber is haunted by his malevolence. The room seems like a safe place to hide — it is easily defended, mostly intact, and clearly has not been used by the Orcs in a long time. However, anyone who rests here gains 3 points of Shadow (Dread), as they are beset by vivid nightmares of being a prisoner of the Orcs.

#### COINS OF LITTLE WORTH

The leather bag that held the coins rotted long ago, but the half-dozen copper coins given to Nár as an insult remain, among the fangs of Azog. These coins, too, have absorbed something of the malice of the Great Orc. Anyone who carries one of these unremarkable coins grants any Orc fighting them the *Hatred* Fell Ability.

The coins have a special potency when it comes to revenge, though — when the bearer makes an attack on someone they have a special, personal enmity for, the target's Protection rolls are *Ill-favoured*.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### FISSURES IN THE STONE

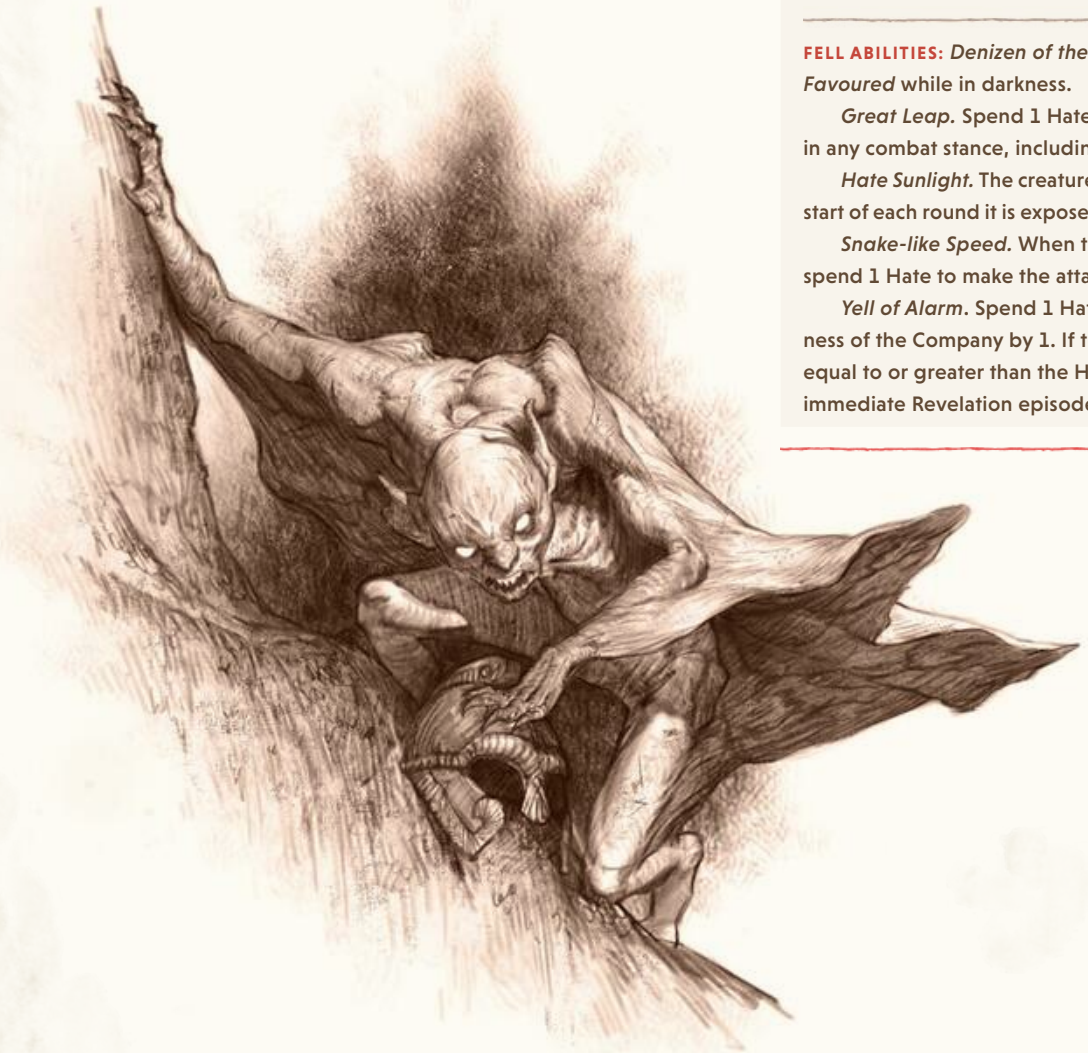
In the year 3019, when the Fellowship reaches the Second Hall in their attempt to leave Moria, they find that a great fissure had opened right across its floor, close to the feet of two of its huge pillars, preventing anyone from crossing the hall from west to east, or vice versa.

This is because the flames of Udûn have consumed parts of Moria, and the Second Hall — so close to the chasm — is especially vulnerable. In the year 2965 the floor is still intact, but if any Player-hero rolls an in combat here, the floor gives away beneath them and flames leap out (this counts as a Severe Endurance loss from fire damage).

### WATCHERS IN THE SHADOWS

Malech One-eye knows that the Second Hall is a key crossroads in Moria, and therefore he stations one of his most trusted spies here to keep an eye on travellers as well as old Gorlakh the Doorwarden — the creature called Reekbat.

Any Player-hero entering the Second Hall may have a chance to catch sight of what looks like a great bat at first glance. If they do not bring the creature down, raise their Eye Awareness score by 4 as the fiend flees to warn its master.



## *Reekbat*

**No-one is quite sure if Reekbat is a horribly twisted Goblin, or something that Malech fished out of the deepest pits. It is Goblin-like in size and shape, but long folds of foetid skin stretch between the creature's ankles and wrists – it is something between a bat and a horrible, hairless squirrel. It shuffles around in an ungainly fashion, but can glide and flit between the pillars of the Second Hall.**

**REEKBAT**
Foul, Secretive

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 4

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 4 | +1 | 2 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Claws 3 (4/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Great Leap.* Spend 1 Hate to attack any Player-hero, in any combat stance, including Rearward.

*Hate Sunlight.* The creature loses 1 point of Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Yell of Alarm*. Spend 1 Hate to raise the Eye Awareness of the Company by 1. If the total Eye Awareness is equal to or greater than the Hunt Threshold, there is an immediate Revelation episode.

# The Last Redoubt of the Dwarves

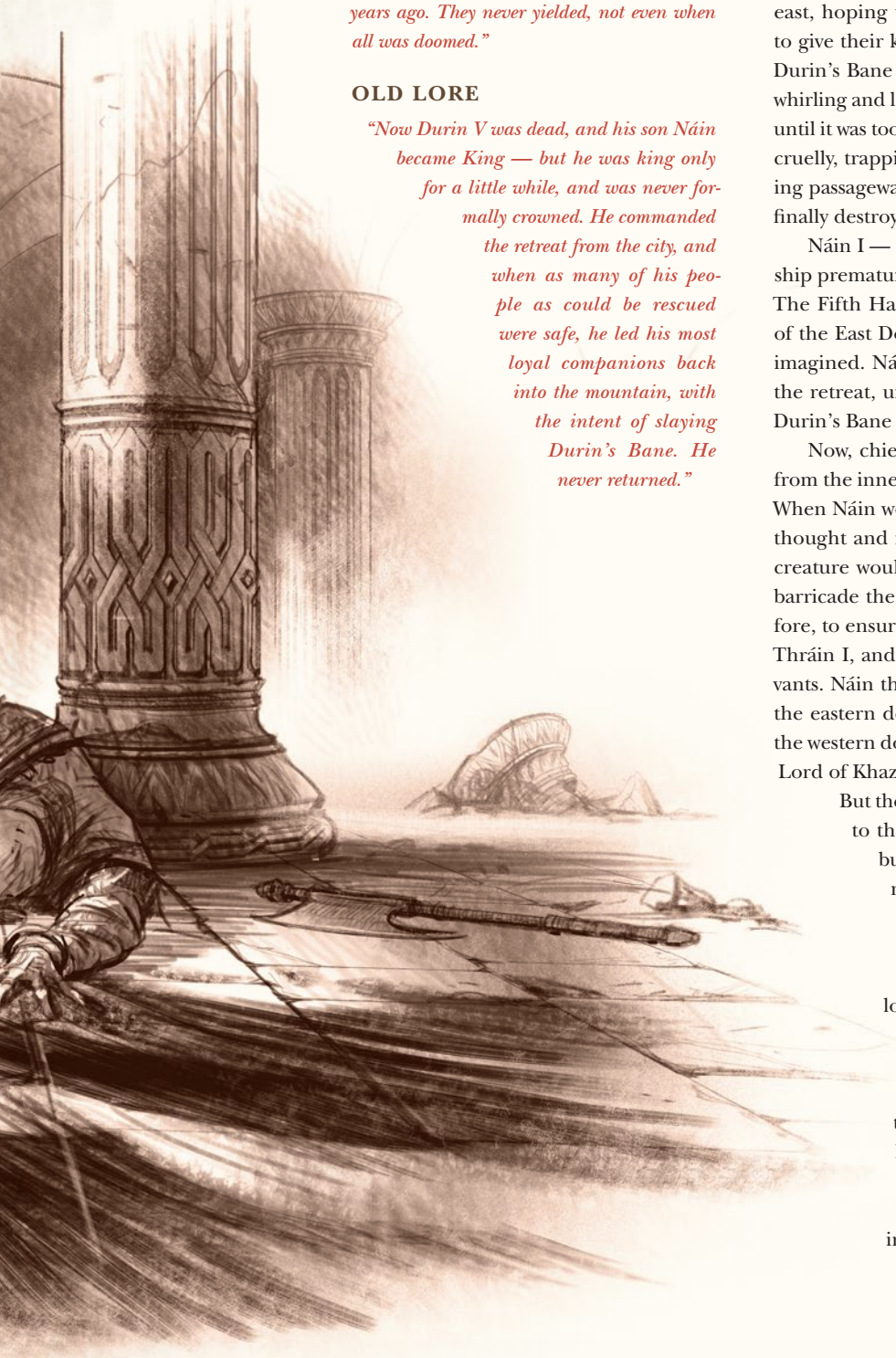
– hidden –

### RUMOUR

*"There are ghosts in the deeps. Put your ear to the ground in the Dimrill Dale, and you'll hear the mountain rumbling far below. Those are the ghosts of the Dwarves who died fighting in the fall of Moria, a thousand years ago. They never yielded, not even when all was doomed."*

### OLD LORE

*"Now Durin V was dead, and his son Náin became King — but he was king only for a little while, and was never formally crowned. He commanded the retreat from the city, and when as many of his people as could be rescued were safe, he led his most loyal companions back into the mountain, with the intent of slaying Durin's Bane. He never returned."*



## BACKGROUND

Durin's Bane awoke in the Year 1980 of the Third Age; Moria was finally abandoned the following year. The creature first laid waste to the ancient city of the Dwarrowdelf in the heart of the mountain; the surviving Dwarves retreated west and east, hoping to hold the entrances to Moria — or at least, to give their kinfolk time to escape. It was a terrible time — Durin's Bane moved through the city like a tempest of fire, whirling and leaping, and none knew their doom was at hand until it was too late. The monster toyed with the Dwarves most cruelly, trapping them in the city by sealing gates or collapsing passageways, penning them up like rats in a sack before finally destroying them.

Náin I — the son of the slain Durin V, raised to the kingship prematurely — chose the Fifth Hall as his throne room. The Fifth Hall was formerly the seat of the Lord Warden of the East Door, and was as defensible a place as could be imagined. Náin and his followers resided here, overseeing the retreat, until the dreadful day when rumour came that Durin's Bane was close at hand, approaching from the west.

Now, chief among the treasures that Náin had rescued from the inner city was the Ring of Power, chief of the Seven. When Náin wore the Ring, he could sense something of the thought and intent of Durin's Bane, and he knew that the creature would steal the Ring if it could, and that it would barricade the East-gate and end any hope of escape. Therefore, to ensure the Ring's safety, Náin entrusted it to his son Thráin I, and bid the boy to go with a small number of servants. Náin then mustered his followers and had them shut the eastern doors of the Fifth Hall, and sound trumpets at the western doors — a challenge to Durin's Bane to meet the Lord of Khazad-dûm in combat.

But the Balrog was malicious beyond measure. It came to the Fifth Hall in the form of a noxious cloud, a burning vapour that no weapon could wound and no Dwarf could endure. Náin and his followers were forced to fall back into the Hall and shut the doors — and the Balrog then sealed the doors with a spell, trapping Náin and his followers in the Fifth Hall.

Thráin escaped, of course, thanks to his father's sacrifice, and he carried the Ring of Durin with him, and that Ring was the foundation of the Kingdom Under The Mountain in Erebor. But Náin and his followers were trapped forever in the Fifth Hall, and there they stayed until they starved to death or slew themselves in despair.

WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE ASHEN CHAMBER

Here was where King Náin's warriors ambushed Durin's Bane — and were destroyed. This chamber was once a mustering-yard where the guards of the East-gate would gather, but all evidence of its former function was destroyed in the Balrog's wrath. While a thousand years have cooled the flames, the chamber is still caked in soot, and the very stone has melted and fused in places.

### 2. COLLAPSED CORRIDOR

The Dwarves deliberately collapsed this corridor to cover their escape. Over the centuries, nameless things must have wormed their way through the rocks, as now there is a very narrow passageway to squeeze through.

Squeezing through requires an **ATHLETICS** roll — Hobbits *gain (1d)*. If even a single Player-hero fails, raise the Eye Awareness by 1.

### 3. THE OUTER REDOUBT

These were the outer rooms of the hall, home to clerks and scribes serving the Lord Warden. Those who survived the retreat from the Ashen Chamber fell back here, horribly burnt. Those who fell still lie here, although a thousand years has reduced them to bare bones. Goblins have pawed through these remains, stealing anything of worth.

The mighty door of the Fifth Hall is a smaller replica of the East-gate. While it is not locked, it is still sealed by the spell of the Balrog. Anyone who touches the door gains 3 points of Shadow (Sorcery). Opening the door requires a Magical success on a suitable Skill roll (**ATHLETICS**, **AWE**, **CRAFT** or **SONG**). Opening the door in this fashion alerts the Balrog to the presence of a mighty foe (raising Eye Awareness by 2).

Alternatively, the spell has faded enough for the doors to be hammered down, but doing so takes effort (a Skill Endeavour with a Resistance of 6, using **ATHLETICS** or **CRAFT**; each roll raises the Eye Awareness by 1).

### 4. THE FIFTH HALL

Within is a sight of horror — and dangerously foul air, for these doors have not been opened in centuries, and the chambers inside are now thick with rot. The skeletons of Náin's followers lie about the place where they died. In their last days, they drew signs of warning on the walls and floor, depicting Durin's Bane and the fall of Moria. These ghastly images depict a figure of smoke and fire lurking on the far side of the door, killing at will, and warn that no weapon can wound Durin's Bane.

A search reveals a considerable arsenal of Dwarven-forged weapons and armour, for these were the best knights of the realm, the King's own bodyguards. Roll the Feat die six times to determine if there is any Magical Treasure here, and assume that any Magical Treasures are Famous Weapons or Armour.

### 5. THE CAIRN OF KING NÁIN

Here lies Náin I, Last Lord of Khazad-dûm. He lies in a humble cairn for one of the line of Durin, but in his hands he holds a heavy ring of keys. The King's grave-goods count as a Greater Hoard — a meagre hoard compared to the lost wealth of the city. Also laid in the grave is a handwritten history, giving an account of the last days of King Náin. It describes how the king first fled to the Mountain Galleries (see page XX) and escaped down the mountain slopes, but returned to Moria to lead a doomed counter-attack against the enemy.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### FINDING THE LAST REDOUBT

The Last Redoubt is a key location in a Moria campaign — it gives the Company a huge advantage in getting into all sorts of places, and ties them directly to the struggle against the Orc invaders and Durin's Bane. At the same time, the Last Redoubt is so well hidden that no Orc or scavenger has discovered it in a thousand years.

Finding the Last Redoubt, therefore, is a moment of grace — a stroke of blessed good fortune that gives the Player-heroes a chance to complete the Quest of Moria. It is part of the fate of the Company that the Player-heroes find it, just as Bilbo's finding the One Ring in the dark was no mere accident. How might you arrange events? Some options:

- A Player-hero (or a friendly Loremaster character) who gets lost in Moria, or falls down a pit, or blindly flees foes might find themselves on the threshold of the Redoubt.
- Player-heroes with a suitable Virtue (High Destiny, Broken Spells, Memory of Ancient Days, Foresight of their Kindred, Skill of the Eldar or similar) might have prophetic dreams guiding them to this place.
- A Dwarven ghost or vision guides the Company here.
- Ancient Dwarven records hint that the Fifth Hall was especially defensible, but the way to it has been lost. The Player-heroes seek out the Fifth Hall and discover the Redoubt.

### THE BONES OF NÁIN

If the Bones of Náin are given a proper burial, either brought to Erebor or another stronghold of the Dwarves, or interred in a tomb more fitting for a Dwarf of his rank, then all Player-heroes involved may remove 1 Shadow Point (or 3 Shadow Points for Dwarves).

### THE RING OF KEYS

This huge ring of keys is a magic item in its own right. Dozens of ornate keys hang from a perfect circle of Mithril. These keys unlock all the Doors of the Dwarrowdelf. The enchantment of opening and returning bestowed on the ring means that the right key is always to hand, and ensures the ring cannot be lost or stolen – if taken, it appears again in the possession of its rightful owner at some point later. The ring can only be removed if the bearer is slain or voluntarily hands control over to another. Additionally, looking through the circle of metal reveals hidden doors and compartments – it bears a Blessing of SCAN.

The Player-hero who takes the ring from Náin's grave becomes the new Key-bearer. Among the doors opened by the Ring of Keys:

- THE EAST-GATE (see page XX, Famous Landmark): This is a large and heavy iron key, very old and solid.
- THE DIMRILL DOOR (see page XX, Hidden Landmark): A much smaller key of Mithril, with the number 17 written upon in.
- THE SECRET CLEFT (see page XX, Hidden Landmark): Another Mithril key, this one marked with the crown of Durin.
- THE VAULT OF URUKTHARBUN (see page XX, Obscure Landmark): An immensely ornate key with a handle of gold.
- THE ROYAL ARMOURY (see page XX, Obscure Landmark): A key of steel, marked with the sign of crossed axes.
- THE DOOR OF THE CITY (see page XX, Obscure Landmark): Similar to the East-gate key, but clearly newer in design.
- THE CITADEL OF THE RING-SMITHS (see page XX, Hidden Landmark): Not a key at all, but the Ring of Keys itself counts as a magic ring.

# The Dwarrowdelf

*'This is the great realm and city of the Dwarrowdelf.*
*And of old it was not darksome, but full of light and splendour.'*

This is Durin's city, the capital of the Dwarves since the Elder Days, and in its day it was great indeed. The city was never a populous one, for the Dwarves were always few in number, but they worked without cease, and the Dwarrowdelf is far larger than its population might imply. They built a city of monuments and galleries. Everywhere a traveller's gaze fell, there would be another towering statue, another many-pillared hall of stone, another magnificent civic chamber.

Now, it is all one great tomb.

It was here that the fight against Durin's Bane was fiercest, the slaughter bloodiest. Many hundreds of Dwarves fell here, cut down with a sword of flame, trapped in the darkness as the lamps failed and the doors were held shut by eldritch sorcery. Afterwards, when the Orcs occupied the city, they defiled the place, toppling statues and scrawling their crude insults across the faces of the monuments.

The complexity of the Dwarrowdelf makes this region a labyrinth. Stairs and pathways run in every direction; one corridor might open into a hall so high-ceilinged that clouds form within it, while another twists into a maze of little alcoves and passageways, or into a region of natural caves — like an underground parkland, with stalagmites instead of trees.

## The Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard

– famous –

### RUMOUR

*"Oh, the beauty of Moria at its height! The glades of flowering stone! The Dwarves built a garden under the mountain!"*

### OLD LORE

*The Cave-gardens of King Thrym were one of the wonders of the ancient world. Dwarves exploring the tunnels of the Misty Mountains found a vast natural cavern, and made it into a beautiful garden, wild and wet and bright. They sowed herbs and rare plants here too, so that wounded Dwarves might find solace.*

### Background

One of the earliest kings of Khazad-dûm discovered this warren of huge natural caverns within the Misty Mountains. The Dwarves transformed these caves into a grand park, where mushrooms the size of great trees and lush greenswards of moss spread out beneath a stone sky. Amid the gardens, they built towers and plazas, follies and monuments, for the Dwarves hold that beauty shaped and considered is beauty magnified, and do not see joy in untamed things.

Once, crystal lamps and light-shafts dug by Durin's Folk illuminated the caves; now, they are almost lightless. Meltwater streams now cascade from the weed-choked light shafts to splash on the cave floor below and the gardens are partially flooded with stagnant water. Blind cave fish swim through the streams. The Orcs mutter that other things also lurk in the dark waters, things that wriggled up from the uttermost depths.

Light filters down from a gap in the ceiling. The caves are far underground, but there is a natural cleft in the side of Silvertine (Thrym's Cleft, the Dwarves called it) directly above the caves, so the ancient builders needed only widen the bottom of that ravine. In previous eras, there were great mirrors of silver and crystal to gather more light from the surface and reflect it into the gardens, but those mirrors are broken or overgrown.

The caves are mostly on the Second Deep, two levels below the Gates; high causeways and bridges cross over the drowned gardens below. The Caves of Thrym are a good place to rest and hide; find an island or a half-flooded tower and take refuge there, sustaining yourself on fish, bats and lake-weed, and you can survive for months — until the twilight and the constant dripping of water drives you mad.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. CAVE-GARDENS

The gardens are now either dead or riotously overgrown. Some plants thrived after the fall of Moria, and grew far beyond their appointed sections. Others perished for lack of care or light. The gardens are a wilderness now. Mosses and ferns cluster around the few patches of wan sunlight that filter down from Thrym's Cleft. In the lightless sections of the garden, mushrooms and slimes have feasted on the rotting plants and now rule where flowers and trees once held sway.

There is enough edible food here to sustain travellers in the ruin, allowing expeditions to replenish their supplies.

### 2. TOWER OF THRYM

The Garden-palace of Thrym Thistlebeard stands on a rise overlooking the gardens. The tower is a spike of stone, and is now surrounded by a forest of huge toadstools the size of mighty oak trees. The Orcs believe it to be a haunted place and do not go there. The mushrooms are eerie but not dangerous. The interior of the tower is more perilous — rare plants were stored here, and one has sprouted and taken over. It is a blood-drinking vine from the far land of Khand, and it feasts on anyone who trespasses in the tower.

### *The Blood-vine*

**The vine is no natural plant; it may be that the unquiet spirit of King Thrym inhabits it, and it seeks vengeance on those who despoiled his garden — or perhaps it is more akin to a Huorn, a spirit of the wild wood stranded in this distant cave.**

**BLOOD-VINE**
Hungry, Mindless

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | RESOLVE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 50 | 2 | 6 | — | 2 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Whipping Vines 3 (6/14, Drain*)

* The attack seizes the target (identically to the Seize Special Damage), then drains its blood at the end of each round the target remains seized, inflicting a Piercing Blow and a moderate Endurance loss from poison damage (a severe one if the target is Wounded).

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Craven.* The Blood-vine is immobile, but if reduced to 0 Resolve, it withdraws into the cracks of the stone and ceases to attack.

*Fear of Fire.* The Blood-vine loses 1 Resolve at the start of each round it is engaged in close combat with an adversary wielding a torch or other burning items.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Blood-vine that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the Blood-vine is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating. This Fell Ability does not work against Endurance loss from fire.

*Thick Hide.* Spend 1 Resolve to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

### 3. THRYM'S TOMB

King Thrym so loved his caves that he chose to be entombed here at the top of his tower. He was buried in a seated posture, looking out at the gardens. A hollow statue of the late king contains his bones, and the statue was made with gaps in the chin so a living thistle-plant might grow from it, making the king's nickname an epitaph. Unfortunately, the Blood-vine has taken root there instead.

If the plant is destroyed, then the Company may take Thrym's Eye, an ancient treasure that was entombed with the king's remains.

#### THRYM'S EYE

Thrym's Eye is a necklace with a sapphire 'eye'. It carries with it a Blessing of SCAN, granting its wearer keen senses. It glows with a faint blue light. Furthermore, when the wearer sleeps, they may dream that they are the statue of King Thrym looking out over his gardens — allowing the wearer to spy on movements within the cave, and even eavesdrop on conversations there. The wearer might see the Goblins from Goblin Village in the fish ponds, or spot poor Buna scavenging for food (see below).

WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

### 4. FISH PONDS

The ornamental fountains that sang amid the glades are silent and still now (though they might be re-awakened if the High Cistern is opened, see page XX), but pools of stagnant water and sodden moss-bogs cover much of the gardens. Cave fish live here, hunted eagerly by Goblins who climb up the Ladder from Goblin Village. The Goblins also believe there's a giant Fish-monster in the depths who hunts *them*. It is likely a combination of Goblin superstition and distorted rumours of the Blood-vine in Thrym's Tower — unless something crawled up from The Deeps.

### 5. GOBLIN-LADDER

The Goblin-ladder is a well travelled route through Moria, leading down and down to Goblin Village (see page XX). Hunting parties of Goblins regularly climb up here to hunt in Thrym's Garden. They bring a tribute of fish to Malech's Fortress (see page XX).

Despite the name, it is not a ladder — it is a series of stairs, corridors, shafts, caves and crawls, but the Goblins keep it clear of obstacles and have installed ropes and footholds for flappy Goblin-feet in the trickier sections. It is easy to follow the path.

### 6. HOUSE OF HEALING

In ancient days, the Dwarves maintained a house of healing here, where their wounded might find rest and succour amid living things. While the Dwarves lack the magical healing arts of the Elves, they applied their craft to medicine with the same diligence they showed in other fields. At its height, the surgeons of Moria had great knowledge of anatomy, and wielded the keenest blades and scalpels.

The House of Healing also had greenhouses and herb gardens where medicinal plants were cultivated.

A thorough search (**SCAN**) of the house discovers some old anatomical texts of interest to scholars (they count as Useful Items for **HEALING**, but only when treating Dwarves; in addition, they are written in Khuzdul).

### 7. LAST LAMPS OF MORIA

The Dwarves hung magical lamps throughout their city, and blazing light drove away the dark. Those lamps are all dark and broken now — all but the two that hang in a corner of the gardens. These lamps still glow. One sheds moonlight, the other warm sunlight. They wax and wane in a curious sequence, their lights mingling at times. Surface plants cluster around these lamps, trees and flowers that have never seen the sun thriving in this blessed alcove.

How the lamps continue to function would be a mystery to their makers — but there are other powers in the world, and some love plants more than they love the creations of Aulë.

### 8. BUNA'S HIDING PLACE

Buna is a Dwarf who was captured by Goblins on the Dimrill Stair, and carried away down to Goblin Village as a prisoner. She escaped a few days before the Company discover the Cave, and has taken refuge in the gardens. She found a little cave to hide in, and has gathered food and water while she plans her escape.

If the Player-heroes find her, she begs them to help her escape. She knows the way down to Goblin Village (see page XX) and can tell the Player-heroes about other key landmarks like the King's Hall (see page XX) or the Vault of Urukthar-bun (see page XX).

What was Buna doing in Moria? She is a servant of one of the possible Patrons described in *Chapter 2* — likely Daza (see page XX) or Fróra (see page XX). Her master sent her to survey the Dimrill Stair, and she was taken unawares by Goblins. Use Buna to set up that Patron as an ally — or rival — for the Player-heroes.

#### *Buna, Unlucky Treasure Hunter*

**Buna's kin are kingless Dwarves, who have forgotten their home and lineage and now wander the roads of Eriador, surviving as tinsmiths. By nature, Buna is practical and resilient; however, her capture by Goblins has so dismayed her that she believes Moria should be left to the Orcs and the Shadow, and that only a fool would remain in these halls for any longer than necessary.**

**As an optional twist – Buna was branded by the Orcs of Udûn, and is under a magical compulsion to lead the Player-heroes to the Udûn-temple (see page XX).**

**OCCUPATION:** Wandering Treasure-hunter

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Rustic, Wary

### 9. THRYM'S CLEFT

The cleft in the cave roof is a natural gap in the rock that permits sunlight and rainwater to filter down from the surface. A traveller wandering the slopes above has little chance of finding the cleft, as it is hidden in a steep fold of the mountain. Only the finest mountaineer could climb up to the cleft, and would then be faced with an equally perilous descent into the dark. However, an Eagle could conceivably deliver a company of heroes to the lip of the cleft, although they would then have to make their own way down the chasm. Traversing the cleft requires a Daunting (Resistance 9) Skill Endeavour using **ATHLETICS**.

## Schemes and Troubles

### THE HUNT FOR BUNA

The Goblins want their prisoner Buna back. (There is still plenty of work left in her strong Dwarven frame!) When they realise that she must have fled up the Goblin-ladder, they pursue her and search the caves. Player-heroes exploring the caves may run into the Goblin hunting party (assume three Goblin Archers per Player-hero).

### POISONED BLOSSOMS

At some point during Moria's long abandonment, a band of adventurers dared enter the long dark of Moria in search of the fabled treasures of the Vault of Uruktharbun (see page XX). They were exposed to the poisons of Angolath there (see page XX), and stumbled through the Dwarrowdelf in search of the rumoured House of Healing in the Gardens of King Thistlebeard. Alas, they perished before they reached their goal, and now a half-dozen skeletons lie amid the mossy groves, bleached bones poking out eerily amongst the green.

A search of the remains discovers a hand-drawn map showing the location of the Vault (see page XX).

### REPAIRING THE MIRRORS

The mirrors around Thrym's Cleft could be restored to bring light and life back to the garden. To do so, the Player-heroes would have to climb up to the Mountain Halls (see page XX), locate the cleft from the far side, and then polish and restore the mirrors. Doing so would flood this great cave with daylight, making it a sanctuary from those who *Hate Sunlight.*

# The King's Hall

– famous –

*A King he was on carven throne*
*In many pillared halls of stone*
*With golden roof and silver floor*
*And runes of power upon the door.*

### RUMOUR

*"The Dwarf-kings of old were fabulously rich, and the richest of 'em were the Longbeards, the clan of Durin. Now the king of the Longbeards, he built himself the most fabulous throne room you can imagine, and there the Dwarves ate gold and drank diamonds, if you believe the tales."*

### OLD LORE

*"It was Durin II who built the King's Hall, and it remained the throne room of his line for many generations, until the death of his heir Durin VI. The chambers adjoining the King's Hall may have been of even greater import. There was the Hall of Judgement where Dwarven criminals were judged, the Hall of Seven Thrones where the Houses gathered — and it is even said that the Dwarf-kings had a way of communing with their maker Aulë himself. If true, then surely such a treasure would be near the King's Hall."*

## Background

Built in the days of Durin II, this was the throne room of Khazad-dûm for many thousands of years — and in every one of those years, the Dwarves made it ever more glorious. The throne was of Mithril and gold, the ceiling a glorious dome of black marble studded with golden stars, the floor of stone polished so bright it gleamed like a great gemstone. Here the harps never fell silent, nor were the tongues of courtiers and advisors ever stilled. Here the kings of Durin's line ruled until Durin's Bane arose.

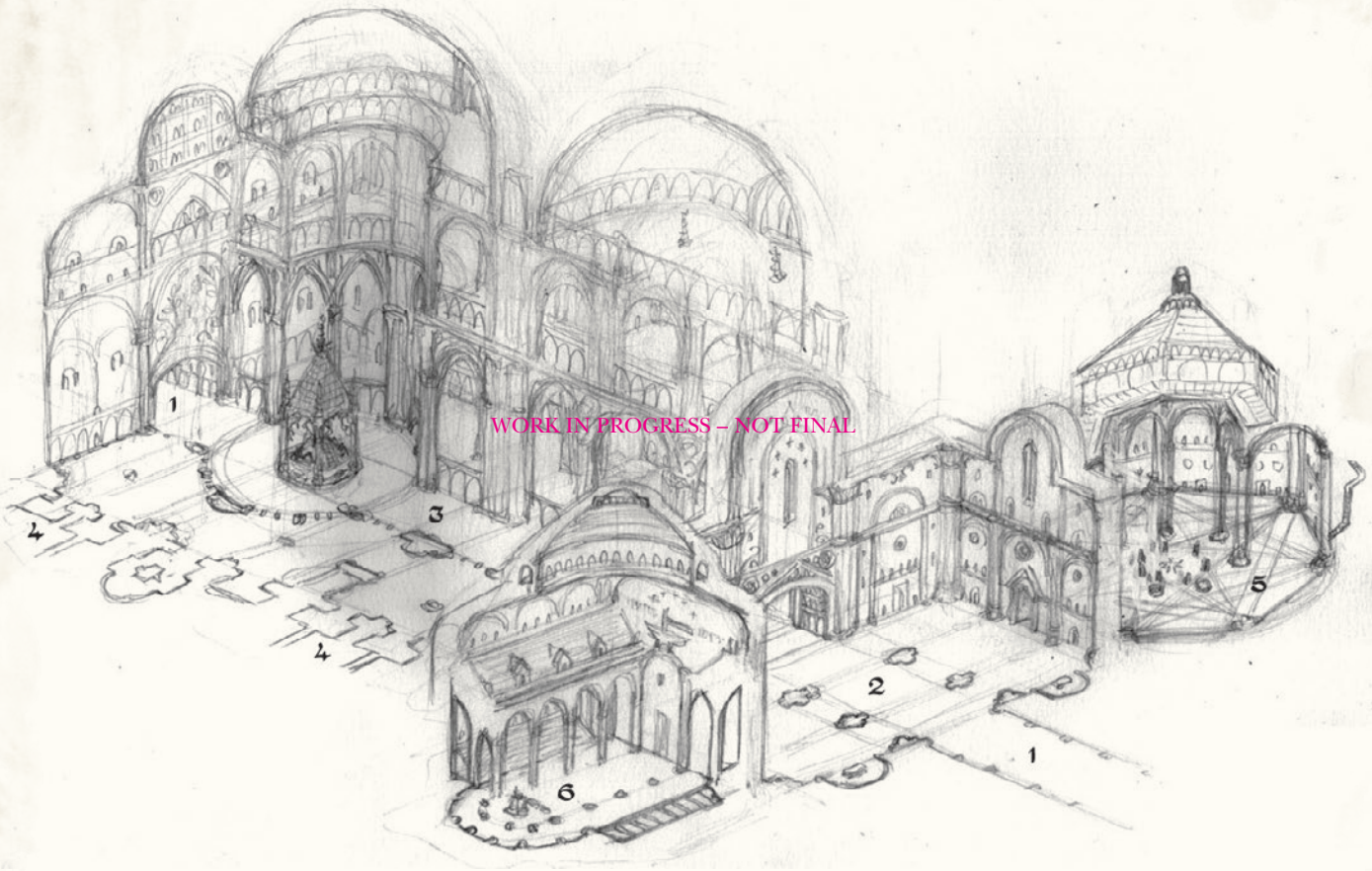
The Orcs fear the King's Hall, and have not looted it as thoroughly as other parts of the city. That is because the death-curse of Durin VI lies upon it, and that is no small thing.

## Locations

### 1. KING'S ROAD

Know, stranger, that you approach the throne room of the King of Khazad-dûm! Be awed by his wealth and power! Behold the might of Durin's Folk!

It is said that the King's road was made so wide and lofty not merely to overawe visitors, but as a challenge to the Dragons. Even in Durin's Day, the spawn of Morgoth troubled the world, and had invaded and consumed some of the lesser Dwarf-halls in the north of the world, not to mention the




fabled Elven-city of Nargothrond. By making the King's Road so large, Durin declared that any wyrm was welcome to try the strength of its scales against Dwarven axes!

But it was another creature of the Enemy that brought ruin to Durin's Halls. Now, the King's Road is a path of scorched rubble and Goblin-traps.

### 2. GREAT ATRIUM

The Great Atrium was likewise despoiled. The crystal lamps that once hung here are broken, the golden statues brought down.

#### BROKEN RUNES

The remains of the King's Door can be used to magically seal a doorway or other portal. Servants of the Enemy who have the Dreadful Spells Fell Ability can break the enchantment by spending 3 Hate.

Each rune can only be used once.

Two of the doors — the ones leading to the Hall of Seven Thrones and the Hall of Judgement — are intact. The door to the King's Hall was smashed into pieces, but not by any axe or hammer-blow. It was sorcery that shattered the King's Door, and a search of the fragments discovers several oddly intact pieces that bear runes of power (**SCAN** roll, one intact rune found, plus one per Success icon ᛉ rolled). The spells protecting the King's Hall were mighty indeed, and withstood the wrath of the Balrog for a time. Even broken, they still have power (see box).

### 3. KING'S HALL

Entering the King's Hall is disconcerting after so long exploring the despoiled ruins and looted chambers of the rest of Moria. This hall has not been touched by the Orcs; gold and beautiful things still glitter in the torchlight. If looted of all its treasures, this counts as a Greater Hoard, but halve the number of Magical Treasure rolls and double the Treasure Value per Player-hero.

That is not to say the Hall is undamaged. The skeletons of Dwarves lie along the walls, and there is a huge burn mark that has consumed much of the silver floor. The throne of Durin, too, is toppled and scorched as if some gigantic blast of fire struck it and whoever was sitting there. Of King Durin VI, nothing remains but ash.

Ash and fury. See *The Death-curse of Durin VI*, on page XX.

### 4. ROYAL CHAMBERS

The private chambers and audience room of the King. These, too, have been spared looting thanks to the Death-curse, so there are many things of worth to be taken here (a regular Greater Hoard).

There is also a concealed compartment in one wall that contains a chest made of gold and Mithril. Elvish runes on the chest read THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE OF THE JEWEL-SMITHS AND THE MASTERS OF THE CITADEL. Delicate etchings on the sides of the chest depict a Middle-earth transformed — Arda Restored, a landscape of towering forests and great mountains. The capital city of Hollin and an underground citadel in West Moria are both depicted.

A successful **LORE** roll guesses this is the very chest in which the Seven Rings were brought to Moria and distributed to the Seven Lords.

### 5. HALL OF SEVEN THRONES

There are seven Dwarven lineages, seven fathers of the Dwarven people — and seven seats here, for seven lords. This chamber, rarely used even in the days of Moria's greatness, was built for the gatherings of the Dwarf-lords or their ambassadors,

### THE KING'S DOOR

Dwarven legends claim that there is a door in the Hall of Seven Thrones that leads to the Endless Stair. Such a thing is absurd – the Endless Stair has been lost for an Age of the world (if indeed it was ever made) and even if it does exist, the Stair was said to lie leagues west of the Dwarrowdelf, not in its very heart. It is patently impossible that such a door exists – but those same legends hold that the door shall be found when the Seven are gathered again.

when matters of import to all the Dwarf-folk had to be discussed. (According to certain scholars of Ring-lore — the last time the Dwarf-lords gathered here, they were visited by an emissary from the surface, and he gave them the Seven).

By ancient and unbreakable tradition, the chamber is sacrosanct. Violence is forbidden here — and the power of this place is such that even a creature of Shadow is bound. Player-heroes who break this enchanted truce commit a Misdeed worth 3 points of Shadow.

A map on the wall of this chamber depicts all of Middle-earth, assembled from the accounts of Dwarven wanderers and explorers — and Númenorean sea-rovers — over many centuries (the Dwarves still pass into the east, under the shadow of Sauron, so they have better knowledge of the lands east and south of Gondor than the Men of the North).

### 6. HALL OF JUDGEMENT

The Eighth Hall of Khazad-dûm was the Hall of Judgement, for it was here that the kings passed sentences on criminals and traitors. Ranks of stone benches line the walls, for punishments were always public. The worst punishment for a Dwarf was banishment, because the exiled were deemed houseless and nameless — their secret Khuzdul names were stripped from them, and they had to find new names as Petty-dwarves. The stripped names were inscribed on sheets of lead and kept in vaults built into the floor here. These lead plates are valueless — except to the descendants of those long-dead criminals, for it is the belief among the Dwarves that if a plate is melted down, the confiscated name is returned and the criminal's standing is restored. Even after a thousand years, some disgraced Dwarves dream of reclaiming their ancestor's honour.

The Orcs have turned this hall into a fighting-pit, forcing prisoners to fight to the death. A sturdy palisade surrounds a central open space. The bones of captured prisoners lie scattered about the floor.

### IMRI'S TABLET

A successful SCAN roll discovers an oddity – a fresh lead plate. It is clearly a recent addition, and was not made using the same techniques as the others. It looks like someone took a sheet of lead, clipped off a square, then scratched the runes for IMRI. This plate was made in a fit of self-loathing by the traitorous Dwarf Imri (see page XX).

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### THE DEATH-CURSE OF DURIN VI

The King's curse afflicts anyone who enters the King's Hall itself — Dwarf or Orc, Man or Elf (and Hobbit too, oh rules-lawyer…).

Orcs, or anyone who has stolen from the Dwarves, have a vision of the Balrog's flames consuming the King's Halls in an inferno. They gain 3 points of Shadow (Sorcery) and suffer a grievous Endurance loss from fire damage. Lesser Orcs are so overcome by the curse they may burst into flame or hurl themselves into the burning depths.

Others have a vision of the King's Hall as it was on the day the Balrog came. They imagine that they were in the hall as flames licked the door and the King and his court prepared for their doom; they gain 3 points of Shadow (Dread) as they 'remember' the Balrog blasting into the hall and slaughtering all the Dwarves. Those who succeed on their Shadow test 'remember' the King entrusting a heavy ring of keys and a small black pouch to them, and commanding them to bring them to 'the new king'. This command lingers even after the vision fades; the Player-heroes gain 3 Adventure points if they find that ring of keys (see page XX) and bring it to Durin's heir (which in this age is Dáin Ironfoot).

### FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

Prisoners captured by the Moria-orcs are brought first to the Ledge of Woe (see page XX). Most are then pressed into service in the mines, or given to the Orcs of Udûn as sacrifices. However, especially entertaining prisoners — either ones who look like they can fight, or look like they can give good sport — are brought to the Eighth Hall, where they are made to fight each other.

# The Chamber of Mazarbul

– Obscure –

*The Chamber was lit by a wide shaft high in the further eastern wall; it slanted upwards and, far above, a small square patch of blue sky could be seen…*

### Rumour

*"The Dwarves love nothing more than well-organised records. Every Dwarven citadel had a chamber of records, and the record-hall of Khazad-dûm was especially large."*

### Old Lore

*The Chamber of Mazarbul lay high in the western portion of the Dwarrowdelf, north of the Road. All the important records of the city were kept there.*

## Background

In days to come, of course, this will be first the seat, then the tomb, of Balin, son of Fundin during his brief reign as Lord of Moria. Presently, the chamber is relatively intact.

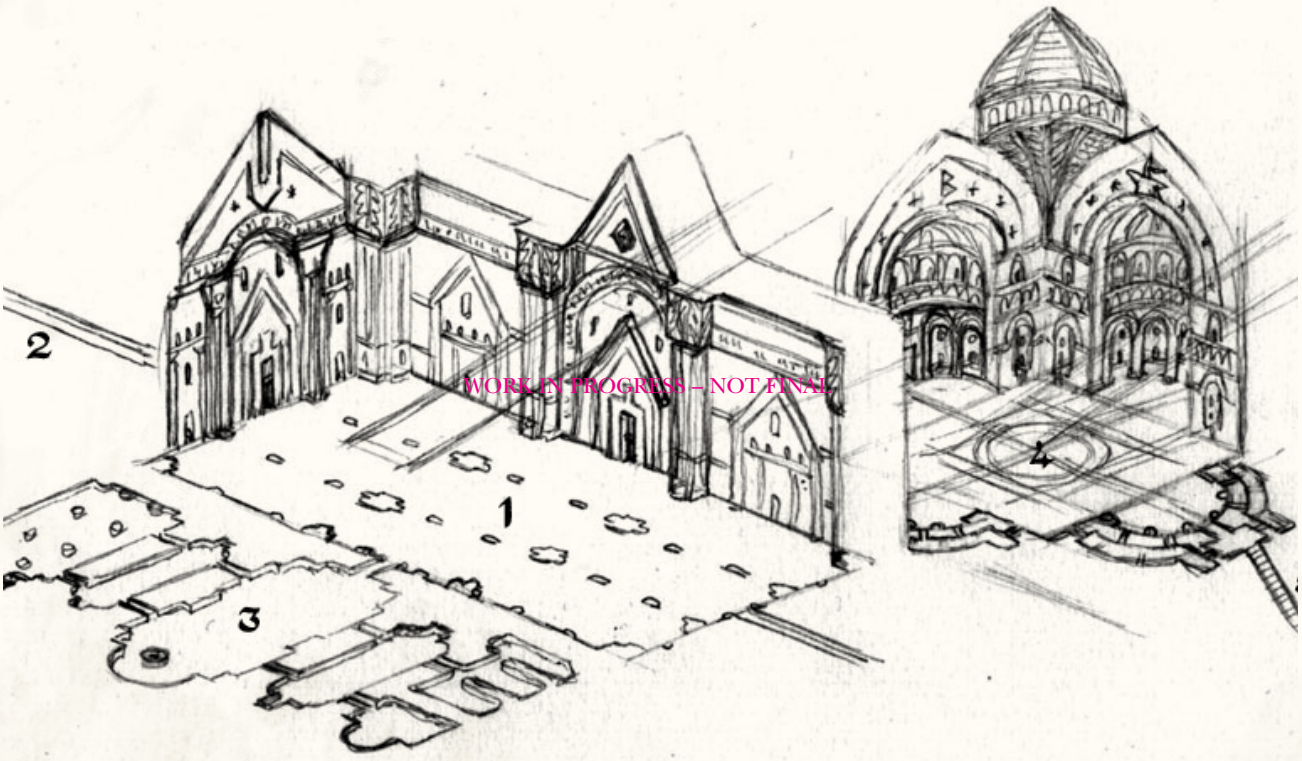
The Dwarves of yore knew secret methods for preparing and preserving paper, making it hard to tear. They preferred engravings in stone or metal for important records, but they were also a diligent and precise folk, with a complex and well-organised bureaucracy. Hobbits may delight in genealogies and family histories, but the stony hearts of Dwarves are set aflame by the thought of great ledgers of accounts and debts, of careful and complex legal arrangements, and of lengthy descriptions of the works of past masters.

This chamber of records was not the only such archive in Khazad-dûm — there were libraries and other records in other parts of the city. However, the Chamber of Mazarbul was the most comprehensive, and notably contained drawings and records of all the great civic buildings and fortifications built over the centuries.

## Locations

### 1. The Twenty-first Hall

The Twenty-first Hall of the North End is a great cavernous chamber, a strategic location in Khazad-dûm, as it is close to the Road, the Mountain Halls, and the city proper. A steady



draught of chill air blows from the east, and disperses through the passages that branch out from it. Sounds echo in the hollow vastness, and darkness reigns supreme at night. On a clear morning, light shines in a long pale beam through a shaft near the roof, to the east.

If the Player-heroes risk a little light when it's dark, or wait for the morning, they see a vast roof far above their heads, and many stone pillars. The walls of the hall are polished black stone, smooth as glass. Four black arches lead out of the hall in all directions. The northern corridor leads to the Chamber of Mazarbul.

Different bands of Orcs have struggled for control of the hall over the last few decades, and the corridors leading to it are littered with broken bones. Today, the master of the Twenty-first Hall is a Moria-orc named Hagrot, but his reign here may not last long. The Mordor-orcs of the Mountain Galleries (see page XX) intend to seize the Hall soon.

### 2. WESTERN CORRIDOR

The Western corridor is narrow and defensible — made more so by barricades and rubble placed at choke-points. Hagrot's Orcs rarely watch this approach, as there is less traffic this way. However, when Malech's forces patrol the Road — or hunt intruders in West Moria, it is here that they muster.

### 3. WELL AND STOREROOMS

The Twenty-first Hall is high up on the Fifth level, close to the surface, so the well here is fed by fresh meltwater and is safe to drink.

### 4. THE CHAMBER OF MAZARBUL

Player-heroes coming from the Twenty-first Hall find a doorway to the right, tall and flat-topped. A stone door is still on its hinges, and opens on a vast, square chamber. A shaft on the eastern wall illuminates the room. A door with an iron ring in its middle opens under the shaft, leading to a long flight of steps.

Many niches are cut in the rock of the walls, along the sides of the chamber. Large chests of wood bound in iron sit in the niches, and hold many scrolls and books of records. The Orcs have smashed a few of these, looking for treasure, but gave up when they only found paper.

There is little worth looting in the Chamber, from an Orc's perspective, so other than a few smashed chests, the records are still intact. If the Company recovers useful records and drawings from the chamber (with a **LORE** or **SCAN** roll), from the next Fellowship Phase they can perform the *Study the Records of Mazarbul* undertaking (see box below).

The stone door is so sturdy it could hold back a Cave-troll — for a little while.

## *Hagrot the Sneak*

Hagrot is an ambitious wretch of an Orc, intent on rising in influence. All the Orcs know that war is coming, even if they are unable to say what this war will involve or what enemy they will be fighting — but they were made as weapons of the Enemy, and as Sauron's dreadful Eye looks north across Middle-earth, the Orcs instinctively respond by growing in numbers, strength and ferocity. Hagrot's plan is to become a leader in the coming war by gathering information about human settlements and fortifications in Eriador. By night, he has spied on Tharbad and even dared sneak into Swan-fleet, and he has heard rumours of distant, half-mythical lands like Bree and Lond Daer.

Hagrot is related to Granny Goblin (see page XX), the matriarch of Goblin Village. Now Granny Goblin has a veritable army of grand-nephews, and while Hagrot has risen high in Malech's faction, he is not necessarily her favourite relative. Hagrot tries to curry favour with his grandmother by sending her gifts stolen from the surface; for her part, Granny Goblin might support Hagrot if she thinks he has got a good chance of replacing one of Malech's lieutenants like Yagul (see page XX) or Grimnar (see page XX).

Note that if Hagrot were slain, Granny Goblin would take that as a personal offence, and take bloody vengeance upon his murderers *"as the goblins of Goblin Town did upon the slayers of the Great Goblin"* (at least, that is the way they tell the story).

Wider than he is tall, Hagrot is a muscular Orc. He is faster than he looks, and the swiftness of his scimitar has surprised many rivals.

**HAGROT THE SNEAK**
Ambitious, Sneaky

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | 1 | 6 | +3 | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Scimitar 3 (3/16), Bow of Horn 3 (3/14, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

Yell of Triumph. Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all other Orcs in the fight.

*Orc-poison.* If an attack results in a Wound, the target is also poisoned.

### 5. EASTERN STAIRS

The door with the iron ring leads to a steep, lightless staircase that descends to the Fourth Level. Unlike the western approach, Hagrot keeps Orcs watching this approach, ready to sound the alarm. He has also barricaded the top of the stairs with barrels full of Goblin-mischief that can be pushed down the steps to explode below, showering anyone approaching the Chamber of Mazarbul with nails and other debris (counts as a severe loss of Endurance due to fire if caught in the blast).

**NEW FELLOWSHIP UNDERTAKING: STUDY THE RECORDS OF MAZARBUL**

This undertaking works like *Ponder Storied and Figured Maps*, but gives a +2 bonus to the Feat die instead. It only applies to journeys in Moria. Furthermore, at the Loremaster's discretion, it may reveal the location of hitherto Hidden Landmarks.

## Schemes and Troubles

### HAGROT'S BAND

Hagrot's band of Orcs are nominally loyal to Malech One-eye, but rarely pay him tribute. He has got a mixed retinue of 1 Orc Guard, 2 Orc Soldiers and 2 Goblin Archers for every Player-hero, but some of those may be out west near the Hollin Gate at any time. Hagrot is eager to take prisoners — partly to deny Yagul any prizes, but also so he can interrogate outsiders about the lay of the surface lands.

Captured Player-heroes who fall into Hagrot's clutches may be able to convince the ambitious Orc to let them go free in exchange for useful information — or even persuade him to help them in assassinating Malech.

### THE RAID FROM THE MOUNTAIN GALLERIES

Har (see page XX) has spied on the area and knows the layout of the Twenty-first Hall. His plan is to send some of his smaller Orcs climbing down the air-shaft, while others attack from the Western Corridor. His intent is to force Hagrot to surrender and switch sides; a spy in Malech's camp would be an even more useful asset than the Twenty-first Hall itself.

# The Vault of Uruktharbun

– Obscure –

*Are there piles of jewels and gold lying about here still?*

### RUMOUR

*"The Dwarves piled all their fabulous wealth in one big treasure-hoard, but never looked at it? Why? Because everyone knows Dwarves are greedy and love gold, and there was so much gold in that pile that if a Dwarf looked at it, they'd be driven mad by the desire to possess it all."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Treasure vault of Khazad-dûm was guarded by a family of Dwarves who were trained from youth to be keepers of the hoard. Neither burglar nor Dragon ever stole so much as a single gold coin from the hoard of Moria, for it was guarded by an impenetrable maze."*

## Background

The Treasure Vault of Uruktharbun was a wonder of the ancient world. The Dwarves of yore laid mighty spells upon the chamber, and they filled the vault with profound *darkness*. No light may shine in the vault, not torchlight nor candlelight nor crystal lamp — save perhaps some greater magic, like the light of a Silmaril of Fëanor. Inside, the vault is a maze of corridors, and many of the chambers contain cunning death-traps. In Durin's day, the vault-keepers were a hereditary caste, trained from a young age to navigate the lightless halls and return with the treasures sought. Some accounts say they grew their beards especially long, and used them like a spool of thread to find their way back to the doors.

The Orcs have tried to loot the Treasure Vault many times, of course. When they could not force the doors or evade the traps, they tried tunnelling, and now the whole complex is like an apple that has been gnawed by innumerable worms. The combination of 'impenetrable darkness' and 'tunnels bored at random' makes any exploration a nerve-wracking and usually fatal experience.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. OUTER VAULT DOOR

The Outer Door of Uruktharbun is a massive steel gate, with the anvil-and-stars of Durin engraved upon it. There is a single keyhole, hidden in the central star. One key was held by the King, and now lies in the Last Redoubt (see page XX). The other key was the property of the Vault-keeper family. If it still exists, then it likely lies in the remains of their mansion nearby, or has ended up in the hoard of some Orc; the Vault-keepers all perished when the Balrog rose. Either key can be used to open the Vault.

Without one of these two keys, the door cannot be opened. The Vault can still be entered through the Goblin-tunnels. Some accounts claim that if the keys are used correctly, the spells of darkness guarding the Vault may be temporarily lifted; other stories say that the Vault-keepers possessed special lamps whose flames could illuminate the maze.

### 2. GOBLIN-TUNNELS

A tangle of tunnels surrounds the vault, approaching it from every angle. The Goblins have bored through the walls, down through the ceiling, up through the floors, even though the Vault is set into nigh-impenetrable granite at the heart of the Silvertine. Player-heroes may squeeze through these tunnels to enter the vault, but there are always watchful Goblins down here who will scurry away to report the presence of intruders (raising the Eye Awareness by 1).

### 3. MAZE OF DARKNESS

A labyrinth of impenetrable darkness, filled with dead ends, death-traps, Orc tunnels and treasure (see *Navigating the Maze*, on page XX).

### 4. LESSER VAULTS

Most of the lesser vaults have been looted over the centuries, or were hastily emptied before Moria was destroyed. If the Player-heroes are lucky enough to find a vault, roll a Success die:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Trap |
| 2–3 | Empty |
| 4–5 | Lesser Hoard |
| 6 | Greater Hoard |

### 5. INNER VAULT DOOR

The Inner Door is similar to the Outer Door, but instead of Durin's anvil, on its middle has been set the skull of a Dragon, slain long ago in the chaotic years of the early Second Age. There are two keyholes, one in each eye socket, and both keys are needed to open the door. However, if the Player-heroes make a search (**SCAN** roll), they may find the tunnel bored by Angolath to its lair. This tunnel is located above the lintel of the vault door, some fifteen feet above the floor, and it is thoroughly tainted by the monster's poisonous leavings. Anyone climbing through the tunnel suffers a severe Endurance loss from poison.

The door can be opened from the inside without needing the keys.

### 6. ANGOLATH'S LAIR

Angolath, the monstrous centipede, dwells in this vault (see page XX). The centipede secretes a whitish-yellow powder from its furry body that is deadly poisonous; after a thousand years, everything in the inner vault is coated with a thick layer of toxic dust. Any movement in this chamber risks stirring up the poison. Player-heroes must make a **STEALTH** roll to tread softly; those who fail suffer a severe Endurance loss from poison.

### 7. KING'S COFFERS

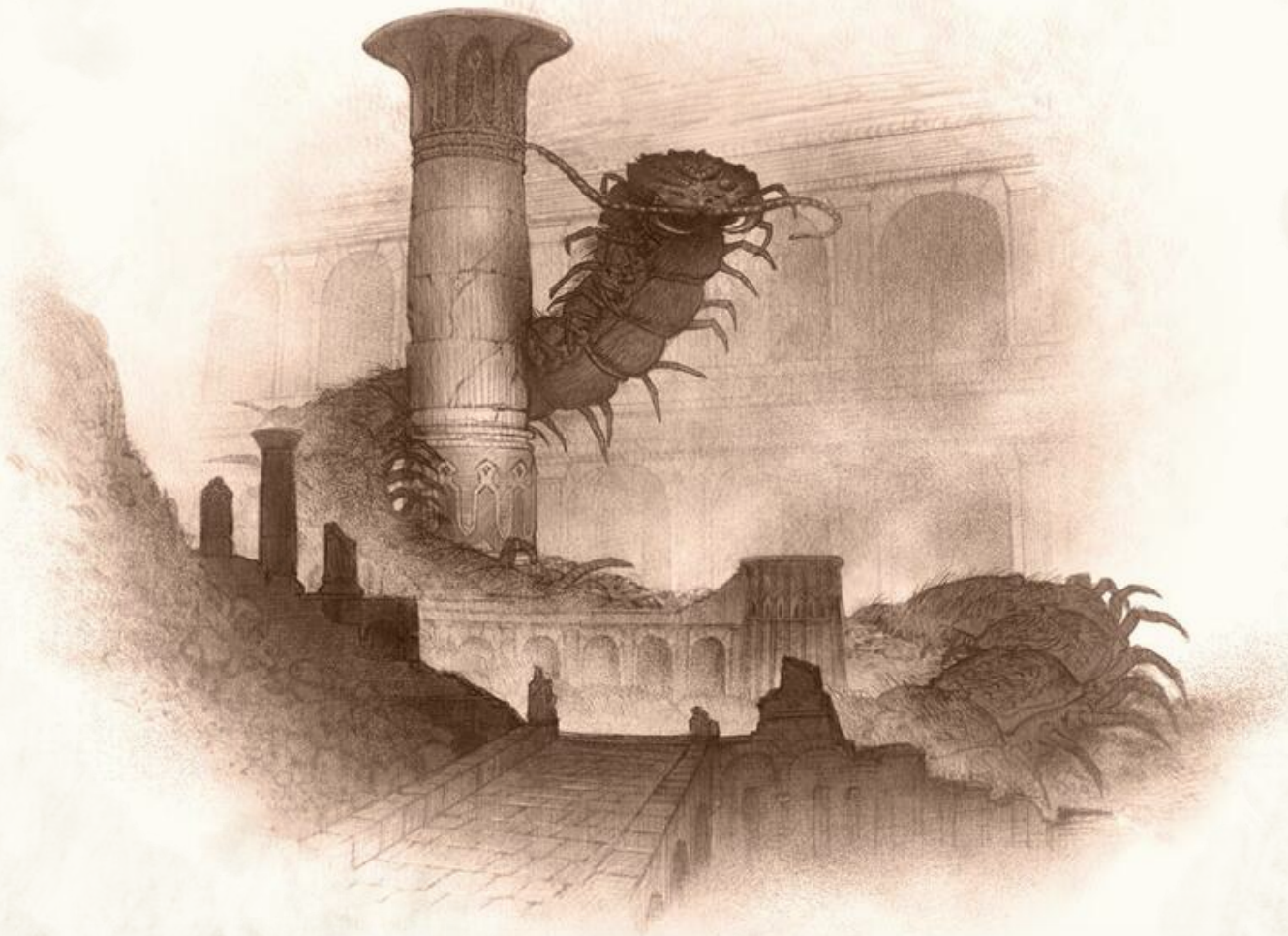
The King's Coffers contain a Marvellous Hoard of Treasure, although the vault lays a protective enchantment on this gold — anyone who takes it from the Dwarves is cursed so that the work of their hands brings them only despair. Anyone who keeps so much as a coin of this stolen gold without permission is committing a Misdeed worth 3 Shadow points.

### 8. MITHRIL VAULT

Mithril for trade was kept in this vault. The Dwarves were never able to stockpile much Mithril — between their own works, and the desire of the Elves of Eregion for the precious metal, only a small amount was left over for trade with other lands. Still, a few ingots of True Mithril worth 30 Treasure points lie here, lost in the dark.

### 9. VAULT OF TREASURES

Fabled treasures and relics of renown. The nature of the contents of this vault were known only to the Dwarf-kings of Durin's line, but that did not stop wild speculation. Some say the vault contained a harp that sang, or a crystal sphere carved by Aulë himself that bestowed visions of Arda Perfected on



those who looked within, or an enchanted Necklace drawn up from the deeps, or a magical pool that turned anything dipped in it to solid gold. Cynics say, though, that this vault was a trick to distract thieves, and that the only thing to be found here is another death-trap.

Certainly, key treasures like Durin's Axe (see page XX) or Durin's Crown (see page XX) were never kept here.

## Schemes and Troubles

### Navigating the Maze

Navigating the lightless maze requires a Skill Endeavour using **EXPLORE**, **SCAN**, or whatever other skills the Player-heroes can justify. Reaching a Lesser Vault is Laborious (Resistance 6); reaching the Inner Door is Daunting (Resistance 9). The time limit is equal to 3; if the time limit is exceeded, then Angolath attacks. Player-heroes may extend the time limit with a **STEALTH** roll: each success increases the time limit by 1, plus 1 for each ᛉ icon rolled, while each failure decreases the time limit by 1.

If a roll fails, roll a Success die or pick one of the following consequences:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Pit!** One of the Company falls into a Goblin hole. Possibly, it is full of Goblins. |
| 2–3 | **Lost!** The Company takes a wrong turn and loses 1 success from their total. If this reduces their total to 0, they end up back at the start of the maze — in any case the time limit is not reset. |
| 4–5 | **Trap!** The Company encounters a Dwarven trap of some sort (see below). |
| 6 | **No Progress...** The Company makes no progress, but suffers no other penalty. |

### Dwarven Traps

There are three forms of Dwarven traps inside the Vault.

- **CONCEALED PITS:** The floor is not stone — it is a thin layer of clay over a pit. A Player-hero who encounters this trap must succeed either at an **ATHLETICS** or **AWARENESS** roll or suffer a grievous Endurance loss from falling.
- **FALSE DOORS:** The 'door' actually supports a heavy stone block, and if opened, the stone falls on the intruder. A Player-hero who triggers this trap must succeed at an **AWARENESS** roll or suffer the effects of a severe Endurance loss from falling.
- **ONE-WAY DOORS:** The door slams shut behind the Player-hero, trapping them in an empty room. The door cannot be opened from inside; anyone outside can try to force the door open with **ATHLETICS** rolls. Failing that, the Goblins will come by in a while to see what is for dinner…

### The Centipede Angolath

The Vault has not been looted by the Orcs — although they have tried many times. Another monster, the gigantic centipede Angolath, has claimed the vault as its lair. Whether this creature was spawned in the vaults of Thangorodrim and carried south by the Balrog, or if it crawled up from the lightless depths below Moria, none can say.

Angolath emerges from holes gnawed in the walls of the vault to hunt for prey. The centipede does not attack immediately, but instead scuttles past intruders, brushing by their legs or crawling over the ceiling to catch their exposed faces, and letting the poison in its hairs weaken its victims before it feasts.

The creature has grown so huge it seems almost never-ending, a ceaseless parade of scuttling segments, each chitinous back bristling with poisonous hairs.

**ANGOLATH**
Sneaky, Swift

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 11

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 130 | 3 | 11 | — | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Bite 3 (6/18, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Foul Dust.* Spend 1 Hate to inflict a moderate Endurance loss from Poison to all Player-heroes in close combat stance.

*Hideous Toughness.* Angolath is unaffected by unarmed attacks. Additionally, when an attack inflicts damage to the creature that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if Angolath is still alive its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Poison.* If an attack results in a Wound, the target is also poisoned (a grievous Endurance loss).

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Thick Hide.* Spend 1 Hate to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

# The Fortress of Malech

– OBSCURE –

*Amid the clamour a deep voice was raised in command.*

### RUMOUR

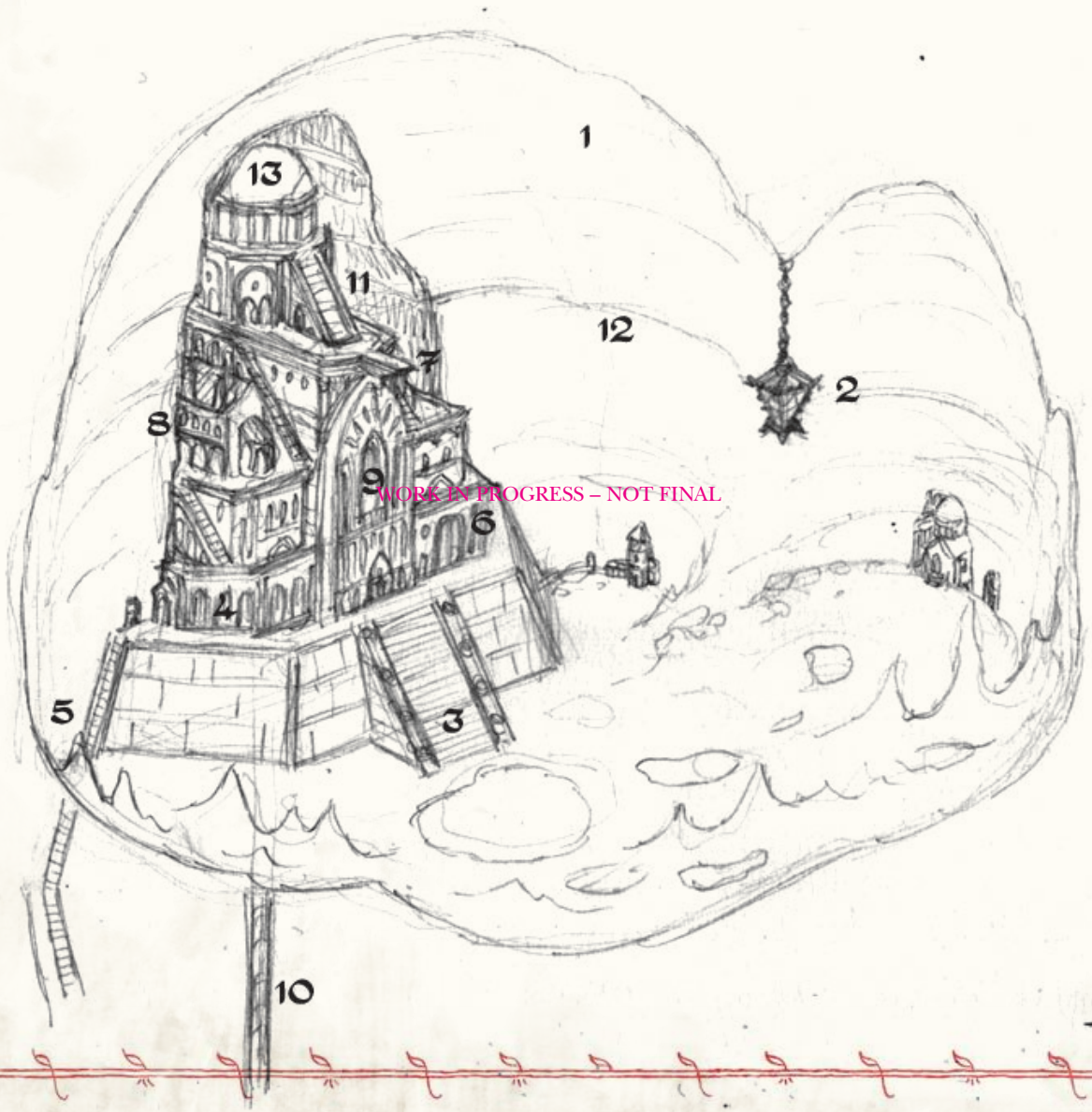
*"Most of the Orcs of the Misty Mountains were killed in the Battle of Five Armies. There is a chance that Moria is still free — unless the rumours about a new Orc warlord claiming the place are true."*

### OLD LORE

*"In the heart of the Dwarrowdelf, there was the Palace of Stairs, built into the wall of a huge cavern. Staircases ran up the wall, and great galleries and halls looked out upon the cave-city below."*

## BACKGROUND

Wisely is it said, uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. Malech One-eye is the Lord of Moria, the Great Chieftain of the Orcs in this region — and so he is consumed by fear, and spends his time plotting against his own followers. He fears attack from without and betrayal from within. His paranoia means that he cannot rest easily — he has made his den in the former Palace of Stairs, a defensible place riddled with secret passages, so his spies can move unseen and watch his own



followers. He plays his lieutenants against one another, deliberately weakening them so none of them becomes strong enough to challenge him. The fortress is a maze full of guard-posts, and a complex system of keys, passwords and secret doors ensures that only properly vetted Orcs can reach the centre of the maze.

At the top of the fortress is Malech's Den, a squalid small complex of chambers where the Orc-chieftain hides from his own followers. His treasury is also found there, a place where he has gathered much of the wealth of the upper city, including some sacks of Mithril. Malech dithers endlessly over this Mithril, unsure if he should send this tribute to Gundabad or to Mordor.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE CAVE OF LIGHTS

This cavern is not so large as the fabled Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard, but is still large enough to swallow the grandest palaces of Arnor and Gondor and lost Númenor and still have space to hold all the halls of the Elven-kings of old. The Fortress of Malech occupies only the western wall of the cave. The cave floor is a mix of broken grounds and pools of icy water, fed by mountain streams. Stalagmites glitter in the light of passing torches like towering candles.

Orcs patrol the cave regularly, though it is possible to sneak from shadow to shadow and avoid detection.

### 2. BROKEN LAMP

A Dwarven lamp of crystal hangs from a chain here. Once, it shone with such brilliance that the whole cave blazed with light, but it was broken long ago. A Player-hero with **CRAFT** who examines it (even from a distance) guesses it could be repaired and relit with a suitable Magical success.

### 3. GREATER STAIR

A wide stair leads up to the palace above. This was the ceremonial entrance, where Dwarf-lords of old gathered in conclave, and heroes were honoured. Braziers that once blazed with sacred flames line the steps. The Orcs have added barricades and spikes to ward off intruders, and these stairs are always guarded by Malech's minions. A password is demanded of anyone who approaches; this lesser password is rarely changed, and is common knowledge among the Moria-orcs. (Right now, it is AZOG).

### 4. YAGUL'S HALLS

Yagul is Malech's chief servant; he is master of the slave pits and oversees the day-to-day running of the fortress. His halls here are a miserable place where captured prisoners are

interrogated, examined and judged before being assigned to some ghastly duty. Most are sent down to the Mines (see page XX), although those who might be useful servants are given to Imri the Traitor (see page XX). Those with potential value are held on the Ledge of Woe (see page XX); those who do not seem useful in any capacity are usually given to the Udûn-orcs (see page XX) for burning. Non-Orcish prisoners are a rare event; most of Yagul's victims are Goblins who got in Malech's way, or who wormed their way into Moria without permission.

## Yagul the Snatcher

Yagul is Malech's right-hand Orc; his role is to keep the mines supplied with workers (see page XX). When Yagul runs low on slaves, he leads raiding parties out of Moria. They snatch travellers on the Dimrill Stair, or from the scattered farmsteads in Swanfleet, or in the Anduin Vale. Failing that, smaller Goblins will do. Yagul has become so infamous in the lands near Moria that his name has passed into common parlance – *"Be good,"* parents tell their children, *"or the Orc-snatcher will get you!"*

Yagul prefers Dwarves to work the mines, for they are hardier than other folk, and know how to work in dark places – but there are few Dwarves to be caught these days, so he must make do with fragile, whiny Men. He is excessively malicious, even for an Orc.

Yagul knows that Malech's hold on Moria is tenuous, and that sooner or later one of Malech's vassals will attempt to overthrow the Great Chieftain. On that day, Yagul will be waiting in the shadows to snatch the traitor and skin them alive.

He expects to become Lord of Moria when Malech falls.

**YAGUL**
Cruel, Sneaky

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | 2 | 6 | +3 | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Broad-headed Spear 3 (5/16, Pierce), Scimitar 3 (3/16)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Great Leap.* Spend 1 Hate to attack any Player-hero in any combat stance, including Rearward.

*Snake-like Speed.* Spend 1 Hate when targeted by an attack to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all other Orcs in the fight.

### 5. LESSER STAIR

The back stair up to the palace was for servants and Dwarf-merchants, and the nearest exit from the Cave of Lights leads down to storehouses in the Deeps (see page XX). Today, the Lesser Stair is mostly unguarded — save for Uftak. The infamous brute makes his lair in a room above it.

### 6. UFTAK'S LAIR

Uftak's Lair is as foul as any Troll-hole: the floor awash in bones, filthy bedding and other Orc-trash, with one key difference — on one wall is a display of weapons, all polished and honed to razor-sharpness. The bent blades of Orcs, the axes and hammers of the Dwarves, spears and swords of Mannish make, even an Elf-bow out of Lórien — Uftak delights in the tools of slaughter and dismemberment.

## Brute Uftak

Uftak is a massive Orc, likely with some Trollish blood in him. He is certainly dumb as a Hill-troll. He worships Malech as a living legend and would do anything for his chieftain, even die for him. Of course, he is more likely to kill for him – Malech uses Uftak as his enforcer and bully, and sends him to deal with any Orcs Malech suspects of disloyalty. The one downside of this arrangement – Uftak doesn't have the wit to remember all of Malech's passwords and security measures, so the big Orc must be allowed to pass through the guard posts without challenge.

If the alarm is raised, Uftak rushes straight to Malech's side to defend him if he is not already present.

**UFTAK**
Huge, Tough

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 8

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 50 | 2 | 8 | +2 | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Orc-axe 3 (5/18, Break Shield), Broad-headed Spear 3 (5/16, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Dull-witted.* Player-heroes can attempt a special combat task against Uftak while in Forward stance. The acting player makes a RIDDLE roll as the main action for the round: on a success, Uftak loses 1 point of Hate, plus 1 point for each Success icon ᘔ rolled.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to Uftak that would cause him to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if Uftak is still alive, his Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Horrible Strength.* If the creature scores a Piercing Blow, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

### 7. DRUMMER'S LEDGE

Malech communicates with his minions in other outposts using drumming. This practice is not original to him — the Orcs have been using drumming and tapping to communicate long distances underground for thousands of years — but he has made an art of it. His drummers can convey surprisingly detailed messages through their beating, and transmit orders through Moria with great speed.

There is always at least one Orc-drummer here, in case Malech needs to send an urgent message.

### 8. IMRI'S FORGE

The treacherous Dwarf Imri serves in the smithy here. Imri is but a blacksmith, without the skill and knowledge of his ancestors, and has not yet mastered the methods of refining Mithril ore into the precious metal. Still, alone of the Dwarves in the world, he has the opportunity to study the works of the Master-smiths of Old Moria, and he tells himself that this makes his dishonour worth the price.

## *Imri the Traitor*

Imri was a Dwarven blacksmith from the Blue Mountains; when travelling south, he and his companions decided to take a longer road and look from afar upon fabled Mirrormere and the Gates of Moria. Orcs waylaid them in the Dimrill Dale, and surrounded them.

To his shame, Imri threw down his axe and begged for mercy from the Orcs. He promised Yagul that he would lure other travellers to Moria, if only Yagul spared him.

Since then, Imri has been a traitor to the Free Folk, serving the Orcs. He labours in the forges of Malech's fortress, making weapons and tools for the Orcs. At times, too, he has done as he swore and helped lure Dwarves into the clutches of the Snatcher. Imri believes — or tells himself, at any rate — that he will one day rebel against Malech and help drive the Orcs from the halls of the Khazad-dûm, that it is better to have a spy on the inside learning the ways and methods of the enemies. This is mostly self-delusion, a way for Imri to justify his cowardice, but a Player-hero who restores Imri's courage (with ENHEARTEN) could make the wretched Dwarf into an ally.

Imri suspects that Malech's hold on power is slipping, so he seeks to curry favour with Uftak by gifting the brute with new weapons and armour. If Uftak takes over after Malech's fall, then Imri can be his vizier, whispering to him from the shadows. It is an unlikely route for a Dwarf to once again rule in Moria, but it is all the hope Imri has left.

**OCCUPATION:** Blacksmith-slave

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Faltering, Secretive

### 9. FEAST-HALL

Malech's hall is cold and silent; while his Orc Soldiers may gather here, there is no raucous feasting, no cheer or celebration of victory. Malech's paranoia seeps down into the behaviour of his minions, so his Orcs are more concerned with plotting against each other and currying favour than anything else. The hall has a funereal aspect to it, grim and brooding. Everyone knows that their master Malech doesn't have the strength for the war that's coming and is therefore doomed, one way or another. All that remains to be decided, in gruff conversations and whispered conspiracies, is who will take over from him.

### 10. YAGUL'S WELL

A well-shaft that descends many levels through the Deeps; Yagul and his servants use it as a quick route down to the depths when the Wailing Stairs are blocked (see page XX). They lower themselves down using a wooden platform instead of a bucket. The well-shaft is only just wide enough to hold four travellers.

### 11. UPPER STAIR

This stair leads to the upper portion of the palace where Malech dwells. These stairs are guarded by Orcs loyal to Malech (or Orcs sufficiently terrified by the threat of Uftak to profess loyalty) and the password to permit access changes daily. Typically, Malech only permits one of his lieutenants into his chambers at a time, so he can play them against each other.

### 12. THE HIGH LEDGE

A narrow ledge, barely two inches wide in places, runs along the wall of the cavern. It might be possible to climb along the ledge to reach the Upper Stair, although doing it without being spotted by some Orc sentry is another matter.

### 13. MALECH'S DEN

The current Orc Great-chieftain and Lord of Moria dwells in the topmost level of the palace. Here were many-pillared chambers where Dwarf-lords once looked out through great windows over the bright-lit caves; here were libraries for philosopher-kings, halls for courts and feasts and solemn debates, the work of many hands and many generations of Dwarven artisans. Now, these chambers are dark and empty, and silent except for the rustling of papers. The half-mad king Malech skulks here in the shadows, collating the reports of his spies and the ledgers from the mines.

Malech keeps his treasure-hoard hidden in these chambers, stored in huge coffers he had Uftak drag all the way from the Vault of Uruktharbun (see page XX). His treasure is a Marvellous Hoard, including many objects made of Mithril.

## *Malech One-eye*

**The lurid scar that slices across the Orc's face was left by a Dwarven axe at the Battle of Azanulbizar. Malech survived that dreadful wound, and he filled the empty eye-socket with molten gold looted from the treasures of Moria. When the call to war came again and the Orcs marched on the Lonely Mountain, Malech was among the honour guard of the War-chief Bolg son of Azog; he marched with a foul heart full of malice, eager to avenge himself on the Dwarves and to lay claim to the Dragon's treasure.**

**Instead, he found himself fleeing the battlefield in haste, pursued by vengeful Eagles and a gigantic bear. Alone of his company, Malech made it back to Moria after many perils. As the only survivor of Bolg's guard, Malech was acclaimed chieftain of the Moria-orcs. Years later, he swore**

allegiance to Gorgol son of Bolg, who in the meantime had claimed the throne of Bolg in Mount Gundabad, after a swift and bloody civil war fought under the mountains.

So, Malech is an old Orc, with a reputation for being invincible. Dwarves could not slay him! Eagles could not slay him! Beorn could not slay him! The other Moria-orcs fear him, but are cheered to have such a legendary warrior as their leader. Malech, though, lost his courage completely after the Battle of Five Armies. He is now utterly paranoid, convinced that there are Elvish assassins or werebears lurking behind every pillar. His bluster keeps the Orcs in line, and he can cope with a few beggars at his door, but he knows he lacks the courage to deal with any genuine threat — but he knows, too, that if he shows weakness, Gorgol or some other Orc-chieftain will replace him.

Now, as the Great War draws closer and the Eye turns its lidless gaze on Moria, Malech desperately seeks a way to strengthen his position. He will consider anything — an alliance with the Orcs of Udûn, luring Gorgol into a trap, seeking out a ring of power, convincing a band of deniable outsiders to defeat the Mordor-orcs... anything to hold onto his position for another day.

He knows that the only thing that waits for him in the dark is a knife.

**MALECH ONE-EYE**
Cunning, Fearful

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 7

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 2 | 7 | +4 | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Broad-headed Spear 3 (5/16, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Craven.* When affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, Malech also loses 1 Hate.

*Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to Malech that would cause him to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if Malech is still alive, his Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all other Orcs in the fight.

## Schemes and Troubles

### RELIGHT THE LAMPS!

The broken lamp that hangs above the Cave of Lights could be repaired by the right hand. Even if the lamp only burned again for a brief time, it would temporarily blind and dismay the Orcs of the fortress as if they had been caught out in the sunlight on a bright day.

### PONDER CRAZED RAVINGS AND PARANOID MUTTERINGS

In addition to Malech's treasure, his coffers contain a wealth of information about the current state of Moria. Deciphering the Orc-scratching takes time (a Fellowship Phase undertaking), but reveals all of the named landmarks in Old Moria, the Dwarrowdelf, the Deeps, the Mines and the Mountain Halls, as well as the threat of the Orcs of Udûn and Mordor-orcs factions. Malech's notes give a permanent +1 to all Feat die rolls made on journeys in Moria.

### THE COMING OF GORGOL

*Two liveries Sam noticed, one marked by the Red Eye, the other by a Moon disfigured with a ghastly face of death…*

Should the Company kill Malech, then word reaches Mount Gundabad of the One-eye's failure. Gorgol, son of Bolg responds by coming to Moria himself, travelling through secret paths to Goblin Town, then marching under cover of night down through Eregion to the West-gate, which his allies will open from inside. Gorgol is a far more potent and dangerous foe than Malech — but clever Player-heroes can turn Gorgol's arrival to their advantage, by sowing discord between the various Orc-factions. Gorgol is unaware of the presence of the Orcs of Mordor, and has no patience for the superstitions and mystic whispering of the Orcs of Udûn. There shall be kin-strife and slaughter in the dark halls, should the Player-heroes turn the Orcs on each other.

# The Mountains of Moria

*Yonder stands Barazinbar, the Redhorn, cruel Caradhras;*
*and beyond him are Silvertine and Cloudyhead: Celebdil the White,*
*and Fanuidhol the Grey, that we call Zirakzigil and Bundushathûr.*

The Dwarves climbed as well as delved. They climbed into the peaks above Durin's halls, raising towers and castles in the heights, building on the slopes of the Silvertine and the shoulder of Cloudyhead overlooking Dimrill Dale; on Redhorn they did not build. The high halls saw the most use in summer, and in winter the Dwarves would retreat down into the warmth of the city below.

The Dwarves were forced to abandon these mountain fortresses when the city was besieged, and while they did later return in smaller numbers, wind and weather has gnawed the stones. By the later years of the Third Age, little remains of the upper city, save piles of fallen stones buried beneath snow-drifts. There are only a few surviving towers, and even fewer of these still hide a route to the city below — the Dwarves blocked these passageways centuries ago.

On the lower slopes of the mountains graze many goats — the wild descendants of animals once tamed and herded. These goats are of unusual size and are infamously aggressive and irritable. Wolves and even Wargs prey upon them, although the goats can escape by climbing — they are astoundingly agile, able to balance on the smallest ledge or rocky outcrop. Hares, foxes and squirrels (red squirrels, not the black-furred squirrels of Mirkwood) live in the forested foothills. Higher up, huge owls nest in the cliffs.

### THE FOLK OF THE ANDUIN

The vale of the Anduin river was once home to a race of Northmen. In time, some moved south to the plains of Calenardhon where they became the Rohirrim. Others wandered from region to region until they settled under the eaves of Mirkwood and in the dales along the Misty Mountains to the east and became the Woodmen of Wilderland. Some never settled at all, giving birth to the River-folk and the Leofrings.

The *éafolc* ("River-folk") are of Northman stock, but share blood with wandering wild men akin to the Dunlendings. They live on house-barges that wallow along the Anduin – barges big enough for a whole family, and build temporary houses on tree-trunks sunk into the mud of the riverbank. They are fishermen, hunters and gatherers, but especially traders. They have a reputation as being untrustworthy, known to pawn off useless 'magic charms' and knick-knacks if they can. However, most of their trade goods are of good quality. They bring furs, amber and timber from the north of the Great River, and carry wine, meat and iron tools from the south.

The people of Leof descend from followers of Eorl who strayed during their journey to Calenardhon. They have preserved their ancestors' superior horsemanship, a skill so legendary that the Dwarves once thought they were half-horse, half-men. The Leofrings wander across all the Vales of Anduin in search of good grazing for their herds, staying away from forests, especially Mirkwood, as they consider it bad luck to walk beneath the trees. They travel in groups of a dozen families or so, led by a headman. Originally they were friends with the Woodmen, but as the power of Dol Guldur grew, some among them chose to bow before the Shadow and entered into the service of the Necromancer.

The Orcs of Mordor consider the mountains their territory. They maintain a watch from several of the ruined towers, to spot approaching dangers or travellers to waylay. The Orcs can endure the bite of the winter wind, but do not like it, quarrelling over who has to climb up and watch, and who can hide underground in the warmth (more Orcs have been killed in knife-fights over watch rotas than by the axes of a whole army of Dwarves!).

Legends say that Mountain-trolls and Giants alike were driven from these mountains by the Dwarves in days of old. No Giant has been seen in the heights in recent times, but it is once again possible to encounter a Troll here, especially on the slopes of Caradhras.

The other key inhabitants, on the extreme northern edge of the district, are the Mountain-Folk of Tarloch, kin to the Woodmen of Mountain Hall. They are a hardy people, grim and unwelcoming to outsiders. They descend from their mountain fastness to the Vales of Anduin, to trade with the River-folk and the nomadic Leofrings (see the box *The Folk of the Anduin*, on page XX).

The folk of Tarloch know Moria only as a stronghold of the Orcs.

# The Redhorn Gate and The Citadel of Barazinbar

– famous –

*On the third morning Caradhras rose before them, a mighty peak, tipped with snow like silver, but with sheer naked sides, dull red as if stained with blood.*

### RUMOUR

*"Moria? Aye, I've heard of the place. It lies in the hills above the Dimrill Dale, off the Redhorn Pass. Crows nest in the ruins."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Redhorn Gate was the old name for the pass through the mountains south of Mount Redhorn (in the Elvish Caradhras). Ever it was a treacherous route over the mountains, but swift if fortune was with the traveller. On the west side, it climbed up from the hills of old Eregion and crossed the slopes of Caradhras before dropping down the Dimrill Stair on the east. There, one may see the remains of the Citadel of Barazinbar that was once the Keeper of the Redhorn Gate. There are ruins all over the Dimrill Dale, but it has been a thousand years since the Dwarves dwelt there, so little remains. The old Citadel is the exception — it was built so well that parts of it yet endure."*

## Background

High and impassable are the Misty Mountains; legend holds they were raised as a wall of stone against enemies in days of old. There are few places where the mountains may be crossed. The ones that saw the most use throughout the centuries are the High Pass north of Moria, the Gap of Rohan far to the south, and the Redhorn Gate.

The Citadel of Barazinbar was once a mighty fortress of the Dwarves, commanding the Redhorn Gate and the pass over the mountains. The towers rose to the sky, and it was said that on a clear day, their topmost battlements could be seen from Hollin (it is plain to see that this is absolute nonsense, but there are Dwarves who insist it is true and grow greatly offended if you argue with them). Though the fortress is named for the Redhorn mountain, it is not built on Caradhras; its foundations rest on the Silvertine.

Now, the Citadel is ruined, the walls rent and the towers toppled. The remains are visible from the Dale below, and some travellers have mistaken its great wreck for Khazad-dûm, not realising that far larger ruins lie beneath their feet. Treasure-seekers still come here, combing the ruins for fabled hoards of gold and silver; they find only Orcs.

## Locations

### 1. TOP OF THE DIMRILL STAIR

The long and arduous climb up from the Dale below ends here — with a slightly less arduous but much longer struggle across the lower slopes of the mountain. The top of the stair was always prone to landslides and avalanches. When the Dwarves maintained the pass, they cleared the screes and warned travellers when the snows on the upper slopes seemed especially perilous; these days, Orcs are more likely to start avalanches to bury travellers.

WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

### 2. AGDA'S CLIMB

Agda's Climb is a sheer cliff above the Dimrill Stair. At the top of the cliff is a cave mouth, and from this cave mouth issues a fast-flowing mountain spring. The waters cascade down Agda's Climb in a furious torrent to join the other falls in spring and summer, and in winter they freeze, turning the cliff face into a glittering wall of ice.

For a few days in autumn, it is possible — but very difficult — to ascend the cliff, when the flow of the falls is diminished but not yet gone. The Dwarves believed that drinking from the source of the falls brought inspiration in the coming year; those who drank from the bitterly cold water were blessed with visions of great works of craft. If this tradition is true, then drinking from the stream gives Inspiration on all **CRAFT** rolls related to a single work until the next Adventuring Phase.

The pool at the base of the falls once held offerings to the dead, in remembrance of those who tried the climb but failed and fell to their deaths. The Dwarves prefer to lay their dead in tombs of stone, but leave tokens of memory if the body cannot be recovered. Travellers who delve in the freezing waters may find a Lesser Hoard here.

### 3. RUINS OF THE CITADEL

The remains of the Citadel stand here — a great mass of tumbled and buried stone, with a few walls and towers emerging from the snow like the fingers of a dead man. The ruins do offer shelter from the storms that blow down off Caradhras — although if they have gotten as far as Barazinbar, most travellers would prefer to push on down the Dimrill Stair and reach the relatively balmy climes of the Dimrill Dale below. Unless, of course, they arrive at the Orc-haunted ruin just as twilight falls and they dare not descend the steep Stair in the dark, in which case… welcome to Barazinbar, my friends! May you live through the night!

A search of the ruins discovers some grisly remains of Orcs — not a fresh kill, for they have been picked clean by the crows, but relatively recent. These were Moria-orcs, driven out of their Warren (5) by the invading Mordor-orcs. Cloven skulls and arrows speak of violence, and may reveal to clever Player-heroes that there are multiple Orc-factions in Moria.

### GHOST-DOGS OF THE REDHORN PASS

When Moria was inhabited, the Dwarves patrolled the Redhorn Pass. They trained great dogs to track down travellers lost or stranded in the snows. These dogs were famed for their endurance and loyalty; some were said to carry little casks of Dwarven spirits on their collars to revive half-frozen travellers. They were ferocious, too, and battled the Wargs of Wilderland.

The kennels of these dogs can still be seen amid the ruins of the citadel. Legend holds that the Dwarves set these dogs free when Moria was abandoned, but that the dogs still patrol the pass, the tradition passed down from dog to pup and on through the generations. Other tales claim the ghosts of these friendly dogs haunt the frozen slopes. In either case, a Player-hero who rolls a ᚠ while crossing the pass may be aided by a mysterious dog...

### 4. CROW'S NEST

This tall tower is remarkably intact. Once, it was an observatory where Dwarven astrologers watched the stars (perhaps warily; Elves love the stars, but Dwarves are said to covet them). Now, it is infested by crows, the many children of Mocker Crawe (see page XX).

There is a Lesser Hoard of shiny things amid the nests. Only Crawe is large enough to actually present a threat in combat, but the whirling and pecking of his offspring means all combat rolls made here *lose (1d)* — and the cawing of angry crows summons Orcs from the nearby warren.

### 5. ORC-WARRENS

Tunnels and re-excavated cellars of the old Dwarf-fortress, now inhabited by Mordor-orcs. While these wretches happily ambush unwary travellers on the pass, they retreat if they meet serious resistance, preferring to flee up the mountain towards the Mountain Galleries via the Mountain Stair.

### 6. THE MOUNTAIN STAIR

This is a sheltered cut in the flanks of the Silvertine, a path leading south and up the slopes. This is the path up to the Mountain Galleries (see page XX). It is a hard climb, especially if the weather is bad, and it often is. Still, a brave Company could follow this route up and discover the hiding place of the Mordor-orcs…

### 7. THE REDHORN PASS

The Redhorn Pass is a difficult crossing of the mountains — but it can be crossed. The path climbs amid many twists and turns, and is often blocked by many fallen stones, or runs along deep ravines. It is a Perilous Location, so the travellers must brave two mandatory Journey Events when crossing the pass. Roll on the Journey Events table below for each event (if crossing in autumn or winter, make *Ill-favoured* rolls).

### REDHORN PASS JOURNEY EVENTS

| FEAT DIE ROLL | EVENT | CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL | FATIGUE POINTS GAINED |
|---|---|---|---|
| ᛟ | Falling Stones and Shifting Snow | If the roll fails, the target suffers a grievous Endurance loss from falling, and everyone else in the Company suffers a severe one. | 4 |
| 1 | Eerie Noises in the Darkness | If the roll fails, everyone in the Company gains 1 Shadow point (Dread). | 3 |
| 2–3 | Bitter Cold | If the roll fails, the target suffers a severe Endurance loss from cold. | 3 |
| 4–7 | Blinding Blizzard | If the roll fails add 1 day to the length of the journey, and everyone in the Company suffers a moderate Endurance loss from cold. | 3 |
| 8–10 | A Path Through the Snow | If the roll succeeds, reduce the Fatigue gain of everyone in the Company except the target by 1, plus 1 for each Success icon ᛉ rolled. | 3 |
| ᚠ | A Gleam of Good Hope | If the roll succeeds, no Fatigue is gained and everyone in the Company regains 1 Hope. | 1 |

### 8. THE SCAR OF CELEBRÍAN

In the year 2509 of the Third Age, Celebrían — daughter of Galadriel and Celeborn of Lothlórien, wife of Elrond Half-Elven — was waylaid by Orcs out of Moria while crossing the Redhorn Pass. While she survived the attack, several of her companions were slain, and she was so wounded by the assault that she could no longer endure in Middle-earth, and took ship from the Grey Havens the following year. The place where she was waylaid is still marked; travellers have dreamed of the attack when encamped nearby. Her sons, Elladan and Elrohir, often come here when hunting Orcs.

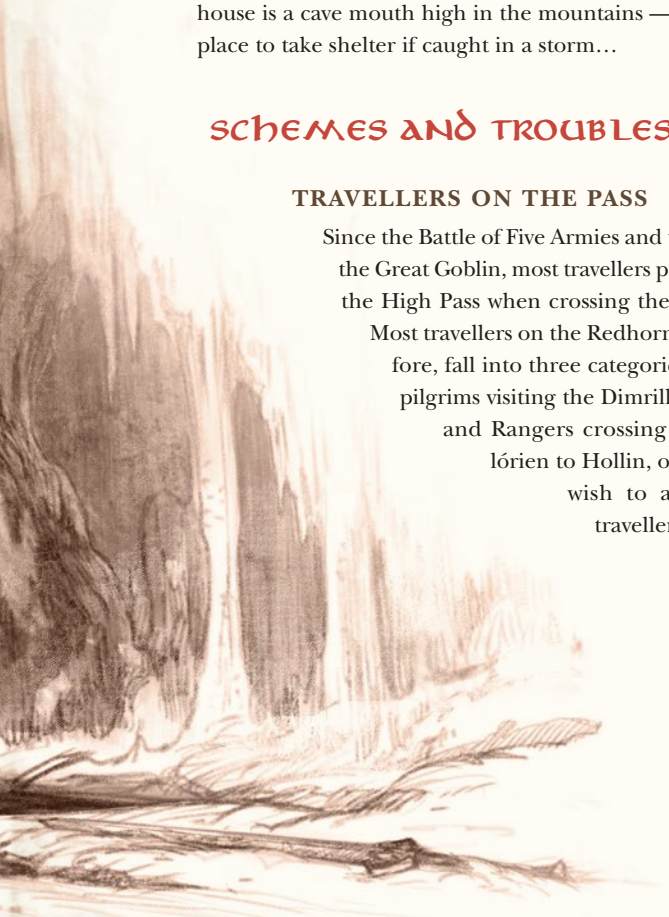
### 9. RED-NAILS' HOUSE

Dwarven legends speak of a terrible ghost that dwells on the Redhorn Pass. The tales describe her as an old woman, her face hidden by a veil or cloud. In the stories, she preyed on travellers in the Pass, alive or dead: she was said to rip frozen corpses open to eat the frozen blood in their veins. Her house is a cave mouth high in the mountains — a tempting place to take shelter if caught in a storm…

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### TRAVELLERS ON THE PASS

Since the Battle of Five Armies and the death of the Great Goblin, most travellers prefer to take the High Pass when crossing the mountains. Most travellers on the Redhorn Pass, therefore, fall into three categories: Dwarven pilgrims visiting the Dimrill Dale, Elves and Rangers crossing from Lothlórien to Hollin, or those who wish to avoid other travellers…



### WAKING RED-NAILS

Snava the Mordor-orc (see page XX) has heard the legends of Red-Nails. Sauron commanded Snava and his comrades to awaken all the old evil powers of the north, in preparation for the coming war. (Many of these efforts are described in *Tales from the Lone-lands*). The creature Red-Nails — likely, a vampire spirit — dwells right on his doorstep. Red-nails has not been seen by travellers in many years, and Snava suspects she has fallen into slumber. How better to wake a Vampire than by luring some fresh meat to her door?

### *Red-nails*

**The skin of Red-nails is corpse-pale, and she dresses all in white – only her long nails are red as blood.**

**RED-NAILS**
Ancient, Ravenous

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 7

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 60 | 2 | 7 | – | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Nails 3 (7/16, Drain*)

* The attack seizes the target (identically to the Seize Special Damage), then drains its blood at the end of each round the target remains seized, inflicting a Piercing Blow and a moderate Endurance loss from poison (a severe one if the target is Wounded).

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Deadly Wound.* Wounded targets make an *Ill-favoured* Feat die roll to determine the severity of their Injury.

*Deathless.* Spend 1 Hate to cancel a Wound. When an attack inflicts damage to the creature that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, spend 1 Hate to bring the creature back to full Endurance instead. This ability is ineffective against Player-heroes wielding a magic weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead.

*Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Fear of Fire.* Red-nails loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is engaged in close combat with an adversary wielding a torch or other burning items.

*Hate Sunlight.* The creature loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Heartless.* The creature is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

# The Mountain Galleries

– Obscure –

*Then slowly they saw the forms of the encircling mountains mirrored in a profound blue, and the peaks were like plumes of white flame above them; beyond there was a space of sky. There like jewels sunk in the deep shone glinting stars, though sunlight was in the sky above.*

### Rumour

*"The King of the dwarves lived deep underground, but the Queen lived in the mountain heights, above the clouds. That is why you never see Dwarf-women; they're like she-goats, living in the tops of the mountains, and they only come down at the start of winter and go back up again in spring."*

### Old Lore

*"The Mountain Galleries were the uppermost of the upper Levels of Khazad-dûm, high on the mountain above the Dimrill Dale. It is recorded they were abandoned by the Dwarves long ago."*

## Background

The Mountain Galleries were once among the most beautiful and airy of the Halls of Khazad-dûm. They were famed for their grand walkways and terraces that looked out over the Dimrill Dale and the Anduin. When there was friendship between the Dwarves and Elves, visitors from Hollin preferred to reside here, where they could see the stars and breathe the open air. Later, the Galleries were mostly abandoned as the Dwarves retreated underground; the halls were stripped bare and left as hollow shells.

One Hall was kept intact, by orders of the King — perhaps out of a hope that the surviving Elves of Hollin would return after the war, and that the art of forging Rings might be taught to the Dwarves. This guest-hall for Elves was adorned in a manner pleasing to them, with living trees and a grand view of the stars. It was from this high seat that Durin IV watched the hosts march south in the Last Alliance against Sauron in the closing years of the Second Age.

Long stairs and paths ran from the city below all the way up to the Galleries; the Dwarves collapsed these stairs when the city was taken by Durin's Bane, and now the Galleries are cut off from Moria proper. No Dwarf has visited these Halls in more than a thousand years, and they have not been regularly used since the early days of the Third Age.

The empty, echoing Galleries are now occupied by Orcs from Mordor, under the command of the traitorous Dwarf Har and his lieutenant Naglur (see page XX and XX, respectively). The skeletal galleries are a cold place to encamp, but the Moria-orcs rarely climb this high, and there is a chance to hunt fresh meat in the forest. For now, Har is content to bide his time and wait for an opportunity to take control of Khazad-dûm.

### *Har, Would-be Lord of Moria*

Some say that in some parts of the world wicked Dwarves had made alliances with Goblins. In the case of Har, there seems to be some truth to the rumours, for Har is a Dwarf, and he counts many Goblins among his acquaintances.

Har's kin dwell far in the east, in lands long under the Shadow. He does not see himself as a servant of Sauron — nay, they are allies, collaborators. They are both craftsmen, after all, and the great work before them is the ordering of Middle-earth. To Har has been entrusted a great part of that task: he leads the Mordor-orcs that have been sent to reclaim Moria. Their task is to rally the Orcs of the Misty Mountains to Sauron's cause, and to send them to war when the time comes. Naglur will

march away at the head of a great Orc-host, and Har will be left to rule Moria.

Now Har has little love for Orcs. He holds that they are no more than tools, living weapons made for a task, and he looks forward to a time after the war when they are no longer needed. The Age to come will be a time for Men and Dwarves to prosper. The Haradrim and Easterlings have grown strong under the rule of Sauron; the Men of Minas Tirith resist only because of Elvish lies and corruption, and when they are defeated and all the lands bow to the Dark Tower, then there will come a time of rebuilding and craft beyond compare. Moria? Moria will be rebuilt and reoccupied by Dwarves, not Orcs – and Har will be their Lord.

Har is not of the line of Durin, or even of the House of the Longbeards, but what of it? Sauron has promised him a Ring of Power should he succeed in his task, the very Ring taken from Thráin in the dungeons of Dol Guldur, and who will question Har's right to rule with such a token in his hand?

Har is deluded, but he is no fool. He knows that his Orcs are too few in number to seize Moria by force – and that even if he did slay Malech One-eye, then he would face the greater threat of Gorgol son of Bolg. He intends to treat the matter of Moria with caution – tapping away at Malech's support, slowly expanding his reach, and using whatever tools and allies he can find.

Above all, Har intends to survive to see the golden Age to come.

**HAR, WOULD-BE LORD OF MORIA**
Clever, Corrupt

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 2 | 6 | +2 | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Battle Axe 3 (6/18, Break Shield)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Fearless.* Har's Might is considered 1 higher for the purpose of resisting the Intimidate Foe combat task.

*Hatred (Elves and Dúnedain).* When targeting the object of his hatred, all attacks are *Favoured*.

*Lesser Ring of Power.* Spend 1 Hate to cancel a success (not a Magical success) on any Skill roll made by a nearby Player-hero. The roll becomes a failure instead.

*Thick Armour.* Spend 1 Hate to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

### HAR'S RING

This ring was forged by the Elven-smiths as a gift for the Dwarves long ago, but was stolen by Sauron when he conquered Eregion. Now, at last, it is in the hand of a Dwarf. It is a heavy ring of iron, studded with fiery-red stones of polished amber. If the Player-heroes gain possession of it, the ring gives the Blessings of AWE and PERSUADE – but it is cursed with Shadow Taint, raising the wearer's Shadow score by 2.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE MOUNTAIN PATH

This is the perilous route that leads up from the Redhorn Gate, far below. It is an arduous climb at the best of times, and virtually impossible in winter. The Mordor-orcs, bred in the Mountains of Shadow and the heights above the Morgul Vale, are adept climbers, but even they fear the biting cold. Secrecy, too, is their watchword — they only travel at night, and try to avoid leaving signs of their presence. They dare not light fires or cut steps to make the climb easier. Still, even they make mistakes, and a tracker might find Orc-prints in fresh-fallen snow.

### 2. THE DEEP PATH

These are the stairways and tunnels that lead down to the Upper Levels of the Dwarrowdelf. The dwarves collapsed these stairways, choking them with rubble. Har's Orcs can enter the city below via the Dimrill Door (see page XX), but that secret way risks being seen by enemies at Dimrill Watch (see page XX) or the East-gate (see page XX). Therefore, Har's Orcs are slowly excavating the tunnels, stone by stone, tap by tap. Travellers in the upper halls of Moria might hear the distant sound of digging…

### 3. THE GATEHOUSE

The original entrance to the Mountain Galleries, now crumbled into ruin. Har orders his Orcs to stay away from the Gatehouse, to preserve the impression that the Galleries are abandoned should any Moria-orc pass this way. However, some of the more eager Mordor-orcs crept into the Gatehouse and defaced a statue of Durin — they carved the image of the Lidless Eye across his face, a declaration that Moria shall belong to Sauron the Terrible when the war comes.

### 4. THE SIDE DOOR

Har's Orcs use this path when entering the Galleries. It is always guarded by Great Orc Bodyguards under the command of Naglur. The Orcs are ordered to hold back any ambushes until the intruders are well inside the Galleries, so they can guarantee that no-one escapes the trap.

If the Company comes this way — especially if they are mostly Men, without any hateful Elves or Dwarves — then Har might order his Orcs to let them pass (see page XX).

### 5. ABANDONED GALLERIES

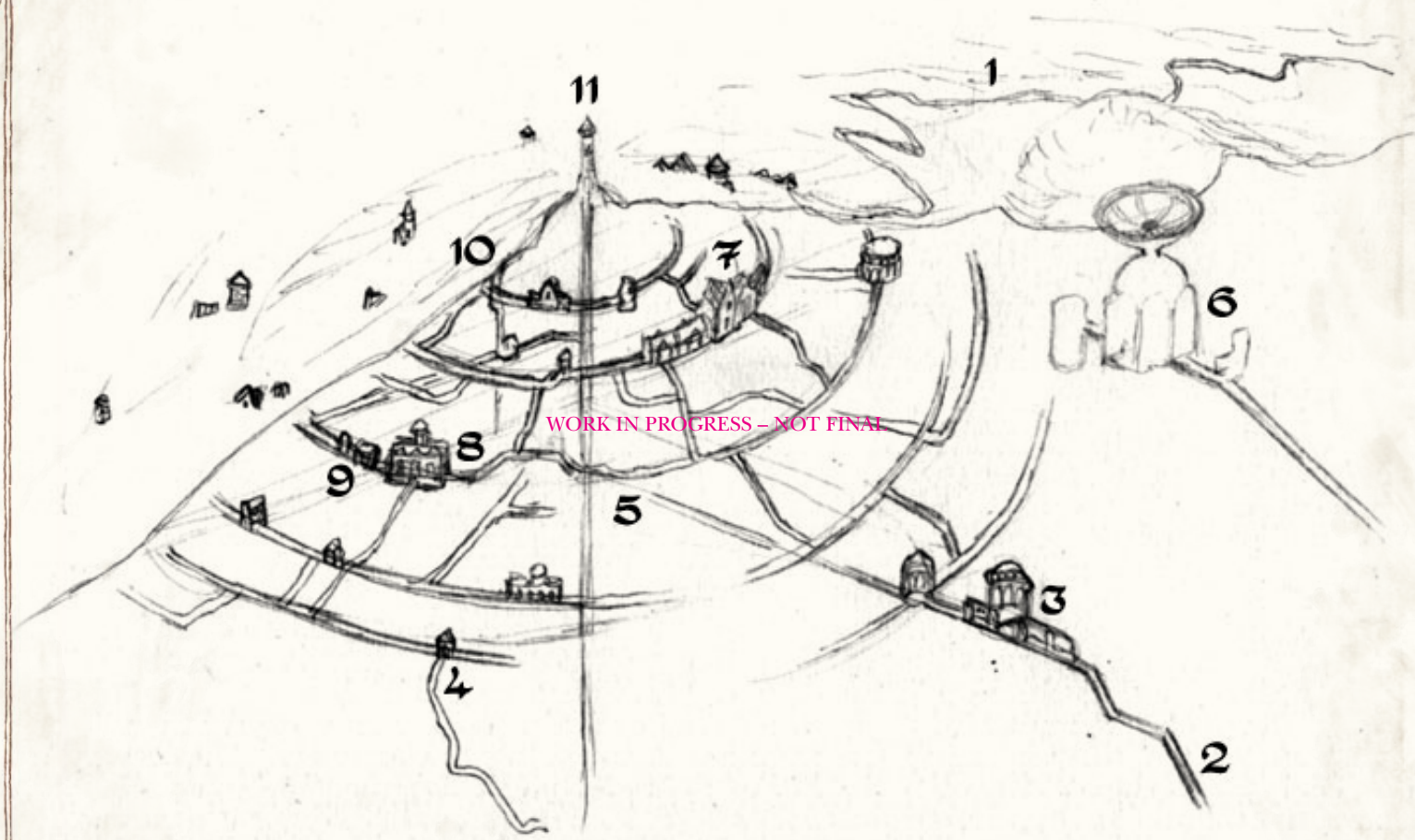
The Dwarves stripped these galleries of all finery and furnishings long ago, so there is little to be found here save snow and the dust of centuries. Har's forces only occupy a small portion of these labyrinthine galleries, so intruders might wander here for hours before encountering enemies.

Potential encounters:

- Caves filled with shrieking bats.
- Storerooms holding barrels of Orc-food — meat preserved with strange powders from Mordor, hardtack biscuits, and pressed lumps of black matter, like a foul parody of cram.
- Halls filled with glittering, unmelting ice, from some water-tank that burst long ago.

### 6. THE HIGH CISTERN

There were once dozens of cisterns in the upper parts of the city. Springs and meltwater fed these huge many-pillared tanks, and pipes and aqueducts brought the water down to the city below. The valves and gates that control the flow of water are rusted and stuck, but the Dwarves also used cunningly-carved blocks of stone attached to pulleys — like plugs in a




WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

Hobbit's bath, only many times larger. Pull the chain, raise the block, and the water flows from the cistern to the pipes below. Release the chain, and the frustum-shaped block slips back into place, blocking the flow. The chains have rusted away, but stone endures. A sufficiently strong Player-hero could lift a block and open the channel below — and one such block is all that stands between the High Cistern and a route into Moria! Beneath the cistern is a pipe that runs down to more pipes and aqueducts in the city below. Of course, one snow-melt could flood the pipes and wash the Company away like spiders down a plughole!

### 7. THE GREAT GALLERY

The Great Gallery was the one hall left intact when the Dwarves withdrew from the heights. A thousand years of neglect and Orc-infestation has damaged it considerably, but the magnificent iron pillars cast and engraved to look like flowering trees are still intact, as are some of the sheltered mosaics — and, of course, the staggering view out across the Vales of Anduin, where the Golden Wood glitters brighter than any gold. Neither time nor the depredations of the Enemy's minions can diminish the beauty of Middle-earth's treasures.

That said — the Great Gallery does contain one treasure of note: a carved map of Moria on one wall. The carving depicts the lost Elven city of Ost-in-Edhil in the west, Lórien in the east, and the Dwarven city under the mountain between them. There are images of Elves and Dwarves working together, images of hammers and anvils and great works of craft — and most importantly of all, an image of the Citadel of the Ring-smiths (see page XX).

### 8. ORCS' LAIR

The coterie of Orcs of Mordor who have occupied the Galleries dwell here. The darkness in these chambers is so thick it is tangible — normal light sources are dimmed almost to the point of uselessness. Only those who serve the Eye can see clearly here. Their treasure-hoard is a Greater Hoard, and includes a copy of the key to the Dimrill-door (see page XX).

### 9. HAR'S CHAMBER

The Dwarf Har has taken these rooms to dwell in, and has repaired them as best he can. Har is a skilled carpenter and carver, and has restored much of the grandeur of these rooms — a promise, he says, of the renewed Moria to come.

A chest here contains a Lesser Hoard of treasure. Some of the treasures were found in Moria, but others were gifts given to him in Mordor (and were stolen from the Dwarves long ago). There is also a lesser Ring of Power, given in anticipation of the Dwarf-ring to come. Har's Goblin servant, Hârelig, is often encountered here.

#### HÂRELIG

**A Goblin from Goblin Village (see page XX), Hârelig was captured by the Mordor-orcs. During his interrogation, the canny Goblin spotted the curious presence of the Dwarf Har among his captors, and managed to befriend him by telling tales of the unspoiled wonders of the lower city. Hârelig claims that there are portions of Moria that are still preserved, still as they were in days of old. As long as he can keep Har entertained with such fanciful stories, the Goblin buys himself another few days of life. Truth is, Hârelig is one of Granny Goblin's preferred grand-children – almost a prince of Goblin Village – and the old Matriarch has been looking for him since his disappearance (see page XX).**

### 10. THE SECRET CLEFT

Hidden in the Mountain Galleries, in the chambers once used as a summer retreat by the kings of Moria, is a hidden cave, concealed by a Dwarf-door that can only be seen on Durin's Day. The door leads to a narrow cleft in the stone, a hollow in the rock. In this place sit four figures — images of seated Dwarves, so perfectly carved that one might believe they were once living creatures who sat down and turned to stone. The kings of old would come here to contemplate difficult decisions and seek counsel from the distant past.

A Dwarf who spends a night here in contemplation becomes Inspired for their next **WISDOM** roll, if made by the end of the following week. Of perhaps more importance to Player-heroes, the cleft is a place of power; evil creatures cannot easily enter here if that power is invoked. A Dwarf in the cleft may make a **WISDOM** roll to refuse entry to enemies.

A second hidden door at the rear of the cleft leads to a narrow passageway, and that passageway ends in a doorway leading to the Endless Stair (see page XX).

Har discovered the cleft, but when he tried to spend the night here, he was beset by nightmares of being buried alive, and was forced to flee. The mountain rejected him, and he speaks to no-one of his shame.

### 11. DURIN'S TOWER

Durin's Tower is virtually inaccessible from the world below. It is carved into the top of the mountain spire, the pinnacle of Celebdil the White — Zirakzigil in the tongue of Dwarves. It is surrounded on all four sides by unscalable sheer cliffs and these heights are haunted by Spirits of Shadow. The only way to reach the spire, short of an Eagle's aid, is to find the legendary Endless Stair (see page XX).

The tower is doorless; a single window looks out over the mountains, and before the window lays a narrow balcony. It is a special blessing of Durin's Tower that it rises above the airs where mortal things live, and pierces into celestial firmaments where only spirits may dwell, the heavenly region where the Sun and Moon walk. From Durin's Tower, then, an observer can see things as they truly are upon the other side; Wraiths are visible from the tower's window, and hidden forces are revealed. To look upon the world from Durin's Tower is not for the faint-hearted.

A Dwarf who climbs to Durin's Tower may ask a single question and be assured of an answer.

## *Spirits of Shadow*

Cold Spirits of Shadow haunt the tallest peaks of the Misty Mountains, above the mists of the world. They are creatures of the upper air, ancient servants of the Enemy. Perhaps they were drawn here by the presence of the Balrog, or maybe they are so old, so thinned by the passing years that they have forgotten all purpose, and can only survive here in this middle realm between earth and sky.

The spirits manifest as whirling shapes of snow and ash that might — from certain angles — appear like dancing, leaping figures. They hunger for the vital force of living beings, draining it and leaving an empty husk behind as a frozen, dessicated corpse...

**SPIRITS OF SHADOW**
Fierce, Swift

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 4

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 4 | — | 2 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Chilling Touch 3 (4/12, Drain*)

* The attack seizes the target (identically to the Seize Special Damage), then drains its life-force at the end of each round the target remains seized, inflicting a Piercing Blow and a moderate Endurance loss from poison (a severe one if the target is Wounded).

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Heartless.* The creature is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Spirit.* Spend 1 Hate to cancel a Wound. When an attack inflicts damage to the creature that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the creature is still alive, it returns to full Endurance. This ability is ineffective against Player-heroes wielding any magical weapon.

## Schemes and Troubles

### Unlikely Allies

As the only Dwarf in a fortress of Orcs, Har craves better company. If the Player-heroes discover the Mountain Galleries, or are captured by the Orcs, then Har might masquerade as a friendly Dwarven explorer, concealing his true allegiance. He might even ally with the Company on some worthwhile mission, like attacking one of Malech's lieutenants or rescuing the Dwarven Thralls of the mines (see page XX).

While feigning friendship, Har tries to convince the Player-heroes that a new age is coming, and that they should consider carefully where they stand and who they serve when the war begins. (Obviously, if there are Elves among the Company, then Har is much more circumspect and careful in his speech.)

### Foul Sorcery out of Dol Guldur

By the year 2965, the Necromancer's fortress of Dol Guldur has been reoccupied by the Dark Lord's servants. If Har needs reinforcements, he can call for more Orcs from across the River. Such Orcs would need to brave the crossings of the Great River, of which there are few. The fords of the Beornings are well guarded

He can also beg the Ringwraith who rules there for the foul smokes and plagues brewed up in the depths of Dol Guldur. With casks of pestilent fog, he could flood Moria in choking fumes. Such pestilence would not poison Orcs, of course — but a demonstration of power like that could convince the Goblins and unaligned Orcs to serve him, and would kill any prisoners or adventurers in the depths.

### Assault on Tarloch's Hall

To distract Naglur and his Uruks, Har has suggested that he plan a raid against Tarloch's Hall (see page XX). Slaughtering a few dozen humans will at least sate Naglur's bloodlust for a while.

### Snava

Snava is a spy and sorcerer; while Moria is Naglur's responsibility, Snava's mission lies further north. Snava is a key villain of *Tales from the Lone-lands* (page 101), and more is told of him there. If you wish to include Snava in your *Moria* campaign, then he might bring allies from the northern Orc-bands to reinforce the Mordor-orcs, or draw on the sorcery of Dol Guldur to call up shadows from the depths.

## *Naglur, Sword of Sauron*

**Naglur is a mighty Uruk, almost as big as a Troll. He is Har's lieutenant and enforcer — for now, at least. The other Orcs see Naglur as their true leader, and consider Har to be a mere figurehead at most. Naglur has little patience for Har's schemes and clever stratagems, and believes that slaughtering the chieftains of the Moria-orcs and bullying the rest of the maggots into submission would be a far more effective strategy. He especially loathes any prospect of dealing with Men, who he sees as inferiors to be enslaved or eradicated.**

**He is a fearsome warrior, bred in the pits of Gorgoroth for the coming war. He has fought against the doughty soldiers of Gondor, and his blade has tasted blood many times. Sunlight holds no terror for him, and neither do the dark places under the mountain. Indeed, he is so confident in his prowess that he grows restless; if Har will not let him slaughter Mountain-maggots, then why not set fire to the filthy wood of the Elves, or raid the weakling Men along the Anduin? The Eye looks north, and Naglur is determined that it will witness his victories!**

**NAGLUR, SWORD OF SAURON** — **ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 7

Arrogant, Fierce

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 2 | 7 | +3 | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Broad-bladed Sword 3 (4/16, Pierce)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Horrible Strength.* If the creature scored a Piercing Blow with a close combat attack, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Thick Armour.* Spend 1 Hate to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all other Orcs in the fight.

# TARLOCH'S HALL

– HIDDEN –

*They soon came to a wooden gate, high and broad, beyond which they could see gardens and a cluster of low wooden buildings, some thatched and made of unshaped logs: barns, stables, sheds, and a long low wooden house.*

### RUMOUR

*"Men dwell in the hills north of the Dimrill Dale, in small numbers. They are an unfriendly folk, unwelcoming to strangers."*

### OLD LORE

*"Tarloch, the first chieftain of this hall, once dwelt in Mirkwood. He was exiled from the Woodmen for nameless crimes, and took up with the Mountain-folk. Later he found a great cave in the hills, and made it into his fortress."*

## BACKGROUND

Two hundred years ago, the exiled Tarloch found old mine-shafts carved deep into the earth — ancient barrows, he thought, the work of Giants. He settled there, making it into a safe place to dwell, and other folk joined him in his new hall. Tarloch believed he was guided to that place by spirits, and he has handed down this belief to his descendants.

In truth, what Tarloch had found was an old Dwarven mine that dug into the northern slope of Cloudyhead, searching for Mithril. Over the years since, Tarloch's descendants have reopened more of the mines, and built a fortified house in the hills. Tarloch's great-grandson now rules Tarloch's house; more than fifty souls dwell within his walls, most of them his kinfolk. They live like Hobbits, using the mine-shafts as a great *smial* with many underground rooms lit by rush-lights.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. TARLOCH'S HOUSE

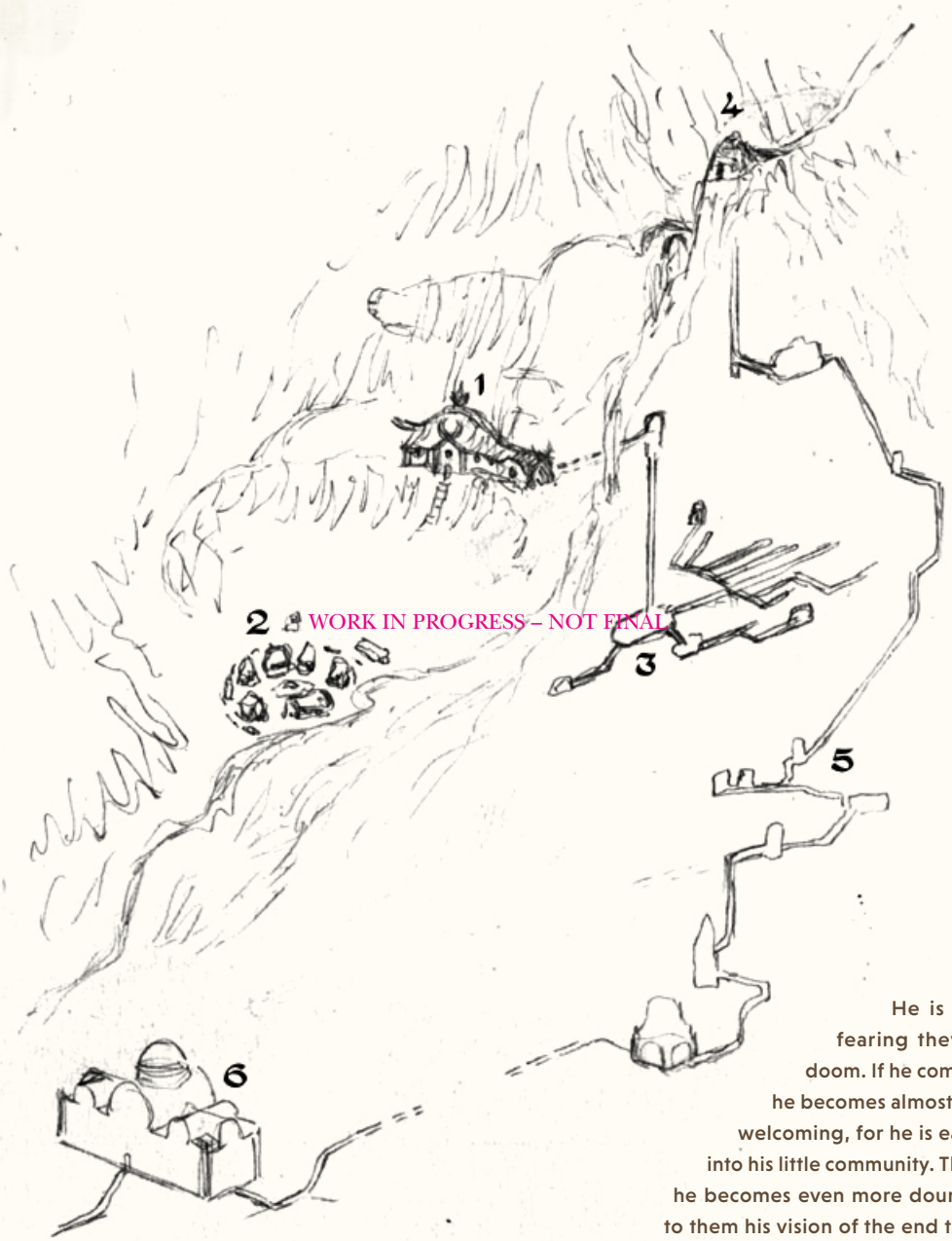
Tarloch's long-house stands over the entrance to the Halls Below. It is a long-house of the type that the chieftains of the Woodmen of Mirkwood dwell in, a pale shadow of Edoras in the land of Rohan. Here, the current leader of this folk — also named Tarloch, like his father and his father's father and so on — rules. There is little feasting in this hall; Tarloch's people live hard lives, and are much beset by Wargs and other perils so they do not travel far. Despite this, Tarloch is a ring-giver — he has considerable treasure, and gives generous presents of gold and steel to his trusted kinsfolk.

The entrance is a steep shaft at the back of the hall. A wooden stair runs down the shaft, but it can easily be pulled down if the hall is attacked, and Tarloch's folk know other ways in and out of the mines.

### *Tarloch, Chieftain of the Cloudyhead-folk*

**When he was young, Tarloch was a merry, boisterous fellow — the spoiled heir to land and fortune, he thought himself blessed with a great destiny. He still laughs loudly, still drinks and sings and gives generously to his trusted followers, but a shadow lies upon him, and he fears what the future brings.**

**As Tarloch came of age, he put on the sword his father gave him, and a mail shirt inherited from his grandfather, and he entered the barrow as tradition demanded. He passed through the Path of Trials and walked amid the abandoned Halls of the Gods. He might have snatched a few coins or a candlestick from the sacred treasure hoard and returned with honour to his folk, but he was the chieftain's son — he felt he had to go further.**




WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

He searched, his torch flickering and fading, and found a door that no-one had opened in a thousand years. With his father's sword, he prised it open — and saw, beyond, the shadow. Durin's Bane.

Tarloch interpreted this as a vision of the World's ending. He stumbled back through the caves and returned to his people. He is still haunted by what he saw, and believes that one day soon, evil will engulf the lands of Middle-earth and destroy all living things. He suspects that Tarloch's house was created by providence as a refuge of last resort, that only his people will survive the coming catastrophe — if he guides them wisely.

He is suspicious of outsiders, fearing they may be harbingers of doom. If he comes to trust them, however, he becomes almost alarmingly generous and welcoming, for he is eager to bring worthy folk into his little community. Then, once they are friends, he becomes even more dour and fearful, and reveals to them his vision of the end to come...

**OCCUPATION:** Ruler

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Generous, Wary

### 2. TARLOCH'S VILLAGE

Tarloch's people do not live entirely in the halls below — Dwarves may build cities underground, and Hobbits burrow into hillsides to build their cosy homes, but humans love the open sky. Some people prefer to live on the surface, only retreating below when danger threatens. The community's forge, tannery and other workshops are also on the surface.

## Meru the Huntress

Meru is kin to those of Tarloch's House, but she does not dwell there. She prefers solitude, and lives high up in the mountains like a Wild-woman. She has several caves and cabins in the heights, and moves between them as the seasons change. Meru hunts the wild goats and snow-rabbits that live in the mountains, and comes down to the valleys every few months to sell furs. The young folk of Tarloch's House whisper that Meru is a Skin-changer who can take the form of a bear, and it is true that her mother was one of Beorn's folk.

Whatever gifts she has, they come with a cost – Meru is compelled to help travellers in the mountains, even at the risk of her own life. She cannot deny a traveller aid, even though she might (and will!) grumble and curse about the added burden. Meru may be the best guide to the mountains, but she is not the most pleasant travelling companion.

She knows Orcs have occupied the Mountain Galleries high on the slopes of Silvertine, and fears they may pose a danger to Tarloch's Hall. Something, she thinks, will need to be done about those foes.

**OCCUPATION:** Hunter, Trapper

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Grumpy, Taciturn

### 3. THE HALLS BELOW

Old Dwarf-mines run under the village, and the villagers have turned a portion of these into a refuge. While the mines run deep, they are no more than a scratch in the earth compared to the Mines of Moria. The Dwarves came here looking for Mithril, but found only iron.

Tarloch's treasury is hidden here, deep in the mines. It is a Lesser Hoard — and entirely consists of treasures taken from the Barrow (see below). Any Dwarf or Loremaster may recognise these as relics of Khazad-dûm. (Over the years, some of Tarloch's folk have guessed the true origin of the treasure, but they have kept their silence — out of fear of Tarloch's wrath, or vengeful Dwarves demanding the return of the treasure.)

### 4. TARLOCH'S BARROW

As well as the mine-shafts, old Tarloch found another work of the ancients, even higher up on Cloudyhead's slopes — what he thought to be an ancient barrow. It was actually the remains of a Dwarven look-out post. The 'barrow' has become a sacred place for the folk of Tarloch: their dead are laid to rest here, and it is customary for young folk on the cusp of adulthood to spend three nights underground. The brave youths travel along the passageway into the caves beyond, and are said to return with treasure.

Tarloch's Barrow, then, is a secret entrance into the city, one that the Orcs do not know about and do not watch. The Mountain-folk have no idea that they are trespassing in fabled

## Vesna, Keeper of the Barrow

Vesna, old and grey, is the keeper of the Barrow in Tarloch's Hall. She lives in the barrow, and she is so haggard that one might be forgiven for thinking she is already among the dead. She is responsible for overseeing the initiations of the young warriors of the House, escorting them down the long dark tunnel lined with the wrapped bodies of the honoured dead, and sending them into the Halls of the Gods.

Secretly, Vesna believes that her duty is to weed out the unworthy. She thinks the dead whisper to her, encouraging her to plant cunning traps and deadly snares in the dark places along the Path of Trials. Since Vesna became the keeper of the Barrow, she has murdered and maimed more than a score of her kinfolk. She believes this is a holy act, a necessary offering to the Gods of the Mountains, and her keening is heartfelt when she washes and wraps the corpses of her victims and inters them in the Barrow.

Vesna also believes that only the folk of Tarloch's Hall are permitted to enter the Barrow and the corridors beyond; should she learn of trespassers in 'her' domain, she would be honour-bound to turn her trap-making on them.

**OCCUPATION:** Gravekeeper, Wisewoman

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Secretive, Sepulchral

Moria — they believe they have found a doorway to a magical realm beyond the confines of the mortal world, and that they walk in the Halls of the Gods.

### 5. THE PATH OF TRIALS

The passageway from the Barrow runs through natural caverns within Caradhras. These caves wind like entrails through the mountain; in places, they have broken under the weight of the rock above, and travellers must climb or crawl through narrow gaps. The malign spirit of Caradhras brings ill-fortune to those who brave these dangers, and not all those who enter the caves return. Skeletons lie in crevices and deadfalls along the route.

### 6. THE HALLS OF THE GODS

This, to be precise, is the Nineteenth Hall on the Fifth Level, not too far from the Chamber of Mazarbul (see page XX). The main route to the Nineteenth Hall was cut off from the rest of Moria by a cave-in, and the Hall went unlooted by Orcs, so its treasures were left to the pilgrims from Tarloch's Hall to find. So far, the intrusions of Men have gone unnoticed by the Orcs of Moria, but as they push beyond the Nineteenth Hall, that may change…

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### THE MORDOR-ORC RAID

Though only Meru is aware of their presence, the closest neighbours to Tarloch's Hall are the Mordor-orcs of the Mountain Galleries (see page XX). Har is planning to send his violent minion Naglur to raid the hold. Har does not know about the secret route into Moria, but if he learned of that, he would immediately move his forces to occupy Tarloch's Hall.

### THE LOST DWARF

Meru finds a bedraggled Dwarf roaming the mountains — it is Ibin the Ring-seeker (see page XX). While a guest in Tarloch's Hall, he recognizes Tarloch's cloak-pin and golden armbands as stolen Dwarf-treasures. He tells the Player-heroes of this theft — what do they do with this knowledge?

### THE WEDDING

Tarloch seeks to bring worthy outsiders into the fold of his household. If a true hero visits his hall, then Tarloch breaks out the best mead (bought from the Beornings) and attempts to get them drunk, in the hopes of arranging a betrothal to one of his followers the next morning.

# The Road

*But going straight, without mishap or losing our way, we shall take three or four marches, I expect. It cannot be less than forty miles from West-door to East-gate in a direct line, and the road may wind much.*

The word 'road' conjures up images of a wide, straight path, a tunnel driven through the heart of the mountain, and in places this is not inaccurate. But the Dwarf-road through Moria is not one path — it was knitted together from many different sections, and then deliberately unpicked.

The Dwarves did not set out to build a road under the mountains. They dug for different reasons, and in many different directions, primarily for mining. They found caves and natural passages, too, that extended west under Mount Celebdil — but these only brought them half-way to the western edge of the mountains. The Dimrill Stair was, for many hundreds of years, the only route west from the Dimrill Dale. The Dwarves built a fortress at the mouth of the Redhorn Gate to guard the western approach, and established new mines and quarries to support this fortress. Over time, these new mines extended until they reached the far end of the cave network — and then explorers found a path from east to west.

The new road was expanded slowly, for the Dwarves had no desire to have outsiders tramping through their halls. Trade still went over the Dimrill Stair, and the road was chiefly used as the spine of many mine shafts as the Dwarves sought Mithril.

The importance of the road grew in the Second Age, as the Dwarves became close allies of the Elves of Eregion — and as the strength of the Enemy grew. Even as Sauron feigned repentance and sought the friendship of the Jewel-smiths of Eregion, Orcs assailed the passes of the Misty Mountains, seeking to divide the lands of the Free Peoples. A safe road through the Mountains was needed to maintain contact between old Moria and the new citadel in the West, and so legions of tunnellers and miners dug to expand and straighten the path. The Moria-road was a wonder of the world, a testament to the stone-craft of the Dwarves. It was in that time that the Doors of Durin were forged.

When Eregion fell and the West-gate was assailed, the Dwarves were afraid that the road would be turned against them, and imagined a host of Orcs marching down the wide boulevard into the heart of Khazad-dûm. In the years after the humbling of Sauron, the kings of Khazad-dûm ordered that the Road be made safe. Sections of the tunnels were deliberately collapsed, so that the only passable route wound around and around through a labyrinth of side tunnels; Road-wardens were appointed to guide travellers, and each warden knew only a portion of the route so that no traitor or prisoner could bring enemies into Khazad-dûm.

In the end, this led to tragedy. Had the straight Road remained as it was in days of old, clearly signposted and easily traversed, a great many more Dwarves might have escaped the fall of Moria when Durin's Bane arose. As it was, most perished in the eastern parts of the road, and only a handful made it to West Moria with tidings of doom.

### THE HIGH ROAD AND THE LOW ROAD

By custom, the Road under the mountain was referred to as the 'Low Road'. The corresponding 'High Road', though, was not the way over the Redhorn Gate as is commonly assumed. The traditional High Road was the road to the Elven capital city of Hollin. Thus, a traveller would take the High Road from Hollin to West Moria, and then the Low Road from West Moria to the Dwarrowdelf. Of course, after Hollin was destroyed and the Elves fled, the old High Road fell into disuse, and travellers began referring to the Dimrill Stair as the 'High Road'.

Certain riddles and inscriptions found in Moria may refer to the high or low road; if a message states that a certain treasure is buried 'six miles from the Doors of Durin, by the verge of the High Road', it is wise to first determine which high road the writer intended...

# The Halls of the Roadwardens

– OBSCURE –

*There were not only many roads to choose from, there were also in many places holes and pitfalls, and dark wells beside the path in which their passing feet echoed. There were fissures in the walls and floor, and every now and then a crack would open right before their feet.*

### RUMOUR

*"There's a road under the mountain, running all the way from Westgate to East, and three ghosts guard it. "*

### OLD LORE

*"The Dwarven kings appointed three Roadwardens to watch over the Road's maintenance and security, and each warden had a hall. Seek out these halls, and you shall know you are on the right path through the mines."*

## BACKGROUND

The Low Road is divided into three sections. From east to west, these are the Straight Road, the Upper Mines, and the Stairs. A Roadwarden's Hall lies midway along each of these sections.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. CITY GATE

The great doors of the city of the Dwarrowdelf were made of beaten gold, and bore images of Durin on his throne. They are gone now; they were blasted by Durin's Bane, and the remnants hacked up and looted by Orcs.

### 2. THE STRAIGHT ROAD

This is the Road as the Dwarves dreamed it might all one day be — wide and arrow-straight. No openings lead to other tunnels or galleries, and the floor is level. The remains of sconces in the walls tell that this portion of the Road was once illuminated by cunning lamps. At regular intervals along the path are way-stations where a traveller might rest, with water-troughs for beasts and thirsty walkers alike. The tunnels are lined with ashlar masonry, snug and dry as a Hobbit-hole even after a thousand years of neglect. In places, travellers might still find a few remnants of the mine-carts and caravans that used this road. It is easy to travel on the Straight Road.

### 3. THE HALL OF THE FIRST ROADWARDEN

The Hall of the First Roadwarden is half-way along the Straight Road; it is one of the best-preserved halls in Moria, mostly undespoiled by Orcs. Bas-reliefs on the walls depict the building of the Road, the empty seat of honour of the warden stands vigil over a hall of empty benches and stone tables. It almost feels like the explorers have arrived only a few moments after a great host of travellers departed down the road, and one can almost imagine the echoes of Dwarven marching songs fading in the distance.

### 4. THE UPPER MINES

The Straight Road once continued west through this region, running several levels above the mines, but those tunnels were deliberately collapsed to protect the city from the threat of invasion. Instead, the Road takes a twisting detour through the upper mines. Deep shafts and spiralling ramps connect this part of the road with the Mines below (see page XX). The correct route was deliberately disguised by the Dwarves, and a traveller must double back several times as they wend through this labyrinth to find the correct path.

The mines under the Silvertine produced iron and precious metals, not Mithril or gems. The Dwarves used the Road to carry wagon-loads of ore back east to the foundries and smithies, and there are side chambers where ore stockpiles might still be found, though the Orcs looted most of these long ago.

*It was Gandalf who raised them all from sleep. He had sat and watched all alone for about six hours, and had let the others rest. 'And in the watches I have made up my mind,' he said. 'I do not like the feel of the middle way; and I do not like the smell of the left-hand way: there is foul air down there, or I am no guide. I shall take the right-hand passage. It is time we began to climb up again.'*

### 5. THE HALL OF THE SECOND ROADWARDEN

The Second Hall is perhaps the most impressive of the three — it is carved into the inside of a titanic stalactite that hangs from the ceiling of a cavern. This hall is cramped, and can only accommodate a handful of guests, but they may reside there in perfect security, for the stairway to the hall is narrow and easy to defend against even a host of foes, while the windows of the hall give excellent views over the cave below and are wide enough to be used as arrow-slits.

The Second Hall may be used as a guardpost by Malech's forces. Roll the Feat die and add the company's current Eye Awareness. On a 10 or an eye, Malech has guards here. If they are present, there is a mix of Orc Soldiers and Orc Guards (a total equal to twice the number of Player-heroes), plus an Orc-chieftain.

### 6. THE GREAT WEST CAVE

The Great West Cave is a significant enough feature to count as a landmark in its own right — see page XX.

### 7. THE STAIRS

After Eregion was destroyed and the armies of Sauron hammered on the Doors of Durin, the Dwarves feared that they might be attacked from the west. These stairs, then, were prepared as a second line of defence. The passages twist round, climb and descend again, and the Dwarves built all manner of traps and fortifications into the tunnels, so that an invading Orc-host might be penned up and slaughtered by doughty axes. The stairs, then, are easy to navigate, but a traveller should avoid leaving the path, as the wrong step might trigger some ancient trap.

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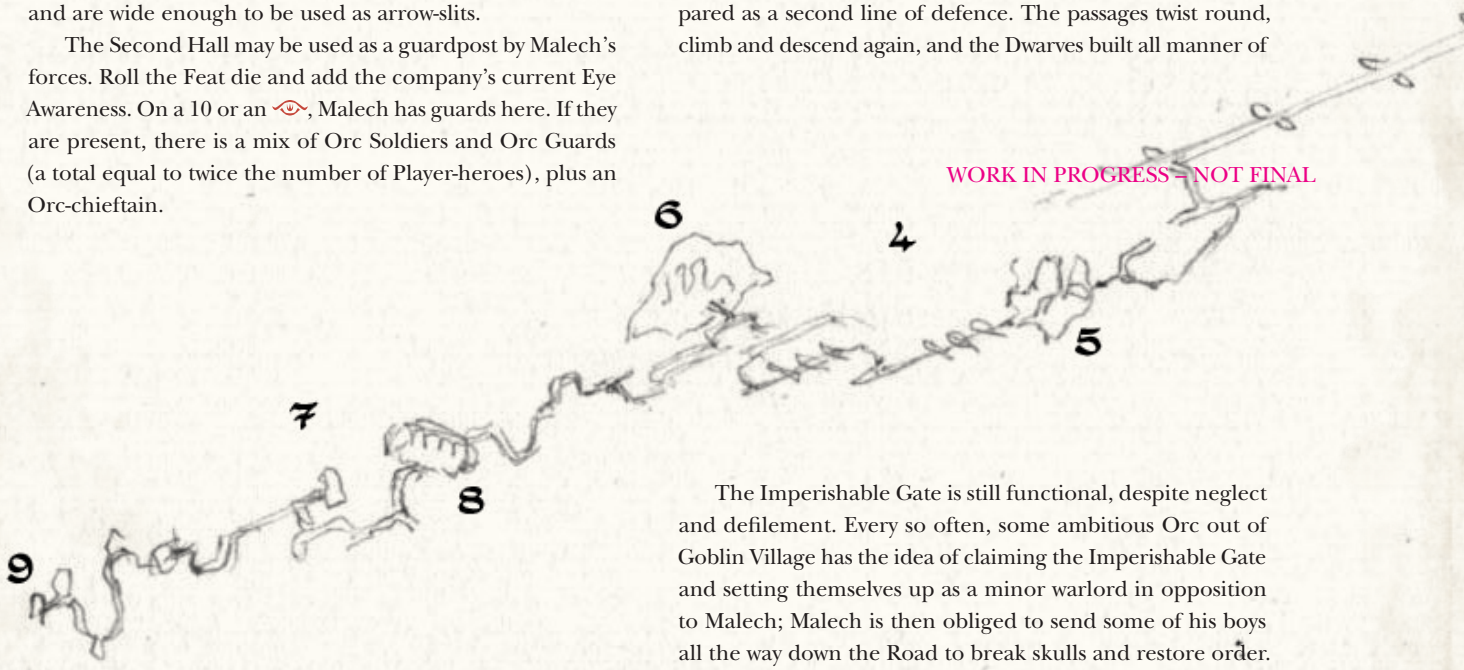



### 8. THE HALL OF THE THIRD ROADWARDEN

The Third Hall sits at the bottom of the Stairs. An aqueduct above the hall has cracked, and now the Hall is flooded with icy, stagnant water; the Warden's seat on its dais rises above the flood-water like a lonely island.

The Orcs fear this place, and claim that a monster with many tentacles lurks here, watching from the water.

### 9. THE IMPERISHABLE GATE

This is the mirror of the City Gate, and marks the other end of the Road. It was named for the Imperishable Hall that lies beyond in West Moria, and bore images praising the Dwarf-lords of the western fortress, depicting their wealth and their friendship with the High-elves. These images have also been defaced, but some of the details can still be made out.

The Imperishable Gate is still functional, despite neglect and defilement. Every so often, some ambitious Orc out of Goblin Village has the idea of claiming the Imperishable Gate and setting themselves up as a minor warlord in opposition to Malech; Malech is then obliged to send some of his boys all the way down the Road to break skulls and restore order. The skulls of the last three Orcs to defy Malech hang from the top of the gate-arch.

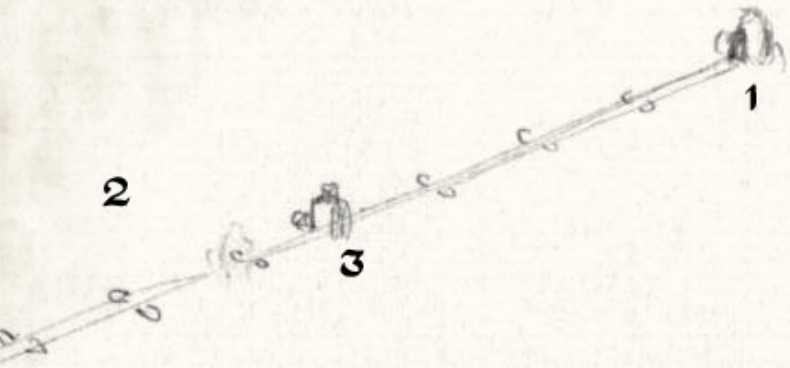
## SCHEMES AND TROUBLE

### NAVIGATING THE ROAD

While the Straight portion of the Road is obviously easy to navigate, the other two stretches are full of twists and branches. The first time the Company takes this path, resolve it as a Skill Endeavour of Daunting Resistance. Skills like **TRAVEL**, **EXPLORE**, **SCAN** and **LORE** all apply here. Set the time limit depending on the circumstances; if the Player-heroes exceed the time limit, then either increase their Eye Awareness by 1 or apply a Revelation Episode without decreasing Eye Awareness.

### STAFFS OF THE ROADWARDENS

Each of the three Roadwardens bore a staff as the sign of their office. These staffs were made of steel inlaid with Mithril, and bore a gemstone (ruby, emerald and diamond, respectively). A hidden compartment inside each staff contained the master




plans for the Road and the adjoining tunnels, including secret observation posts and hidden passageways. Legends claim the bearer of such a staff can command any door on the Road to open or close with a word; when seated in their respective Hall, the bearer could call down powerful blessings or curses on the heads of travellers in their domain.

All three Staffs are lost. Maybe they were destroyed in the fall of Moria, or stolen by Orcs — or maybe they are still waiting to be found in some dark, underground corner, or they lie half-forgotten in some treasuries of the Blue Mountains or some other Dwarf-hold.

# The Great West Cave

– Obscure –

### RUMOUR

*"The heart of the mountain is hollow — there's an enchanted cave there where a hero of old sleeps until they are needed."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Great West Cave is one of the wonders of Moria, even vaster than the Caves of Thrym Thistlebeard. It lies a little way off the Road, but Dwarven travellers would always take the time to look upon its majesty. It is said that the first veins of Mithril were found here, long ago."*

## Background

Dwarven legend claims that Durin I went exploring the tunnels under the mountain when the world was young, and he met a monster in a dark cave. Some tales claim it was a Dragon, others speak of a fiery spirit, or a horror that crawled up out of the foundations of the earth. Durin and the beast wrestled, and the fury of their battle was so great that the mountain was shattered, and this huge cave was rent in the living stone. In the end, Durin defeated his foe and smote its ruin upon the stone.

## Locations

### 1. The Hostel of Fáin

This complex was once an inn on the Low Road where travellers and visitors to the Cave could rest. It is ruined now — but Orcs have not despoiled it; they fear this area and hurry through it.

In the chaotic days after Durin's Bane appeared, many Dwarves took refuge here. Many of them were forced to abandon prized possessions as they fled, which may still lie here, amid the decayed remnants. There may be treasure here — but also documents, records, keys and other personal effects.

### 2. Nan and Gilim

Nan and Gilim are two massive elevator platforms. A complex system of chains, cogs and counterweights enabled Dwarves to lower one platform down a deep chasm into the mines below, using the other as a counterweight as it ascended. Five of the eight chains supporting Nan have snapped and the platform now dangles over the abyss at a steep angle. Nan was on its way back up when the mine-shaft was abandoned, and the platform was loaded with Mithril-ore. Most of the ore is lost, but there is still a great fortune of Mithril atop the creaking platform — if anyone is brave enough to climb down and get it.

Gilim's chains are rusted, but might be repaired. In ages past, the Orcs used Gilim for sport, forcing prisoners onto the platform and then lowering it half-way into the pit so the prisoners could not escape. Only when one slave killed the rest would the Orcs raise the platform once more. Gilim's surface is still stained with dried gore, but the Orcs no longer play here. They fled when they stirred up the Stone Ghost (see box).

### 3. Paths to the Mines

Tunnels wind down from the Great West Cave down to the Mines (see page XX). The Orcs rarely use these tunnels, as they are too far from their regular haunts in the Dwarrowdelf.

### 4. PILLARS OF FÁIN

The Pillars of Fáin are a cluster of magnificent stalagmites that stretch from floor to ceiling. The pillars are flecked with crystals, so the light of a torch makes them blaze like the rising sun. Water constantly drips from the ceiling, each droplet leaving a speck of limestone that will, over long ages, build up into new Pillars.

It was the custom of some Dwarven mystics and hermits to come here when the hour of their deaths was upon them, so that the slow growth of stone would entomb their bones in stalagmites. The Pillars of Fáin are a shrine and graveyard as well as a place of beauty.

### 5. THE HEART OF THE MOUNTAIN

Here, hidden amid the rocks, is a narrow path known only to a handful of Dwarves. It leads to a secret cave, and there lies a rough-hewn coffin of stone, and on the lid of that coffin these runes appear:

DURIN
FIRST TO AWAKE
FATHER OF HIS FOLK
LORD OF KHAZAD-DÛM

This is the tomb of Durin, first of the Dwarves. It cannot be opened by any art or device available to the Player-heroes, and neither pick nor chisel will mark the black stone of the casket (simply trying to defile or plunder the sepulchre is a Misdeed worth 3 points of Shadow). The coffin shall remain closed until Durin wakes again from sleep.

This is still a place of power. First, no adversary will trouble the Company here, for they are guarded by the forbiddance of Durin. Few creatures in Middle-earth have the strength to overcome this barrier (although Durin's Bane could). Therefore, the Company may rest here safely. Second, the first time a Dwarf sleeps in this chamber, they are blessed with a prophetic dream. Usually, this takes the form of a vision of craft, inspiring the Dwarf to make or repair some wonderful art; for Player-heroes, the vision may be more practical, pointing them towards some secret location in Moria (like *The Last Redoubt*, see page XX, the *Armouries of the Third Deep*, see page XX, *The Citadel of the Ring-smiths*, see page XX).

## *The Stone Ghost*

A spirit haunts this portion of the cave beyond the Pillars of Fáin. If anyone trespasses here, they risk the spirit rising up to attack them. The Orcs call it the Stone Ghost – the spirit is invisible to mortal eyes, but it can hurl rocks and boulders as weapons, crushing and grinding its victims into a bloody pulp. The Ghost does not pursue enemies beyond the confines of the cave.

The Moria-orcs fear it; the Orcs of Udûn worship it, and leave offerings near the Pillars of Fáin in the hope of placating the spirit. The Mordor-orcs do not know the Ghost exists, but if they did, they would doubtless try to control it.

It may be that the Stone Ghost is a spell of the Dwarves, and will permit those with the right blessing to pass – but anyone who trespasses in Moria does so without the permission of the King of the Longbeards, so it may be that the Ghost shall watch this place until the world changes in the Fourth Age.

**STONE GHOST**
Cryptic, Mighty

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 9

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | RESOLVE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 70 | 2 | 9 | – | 5 |

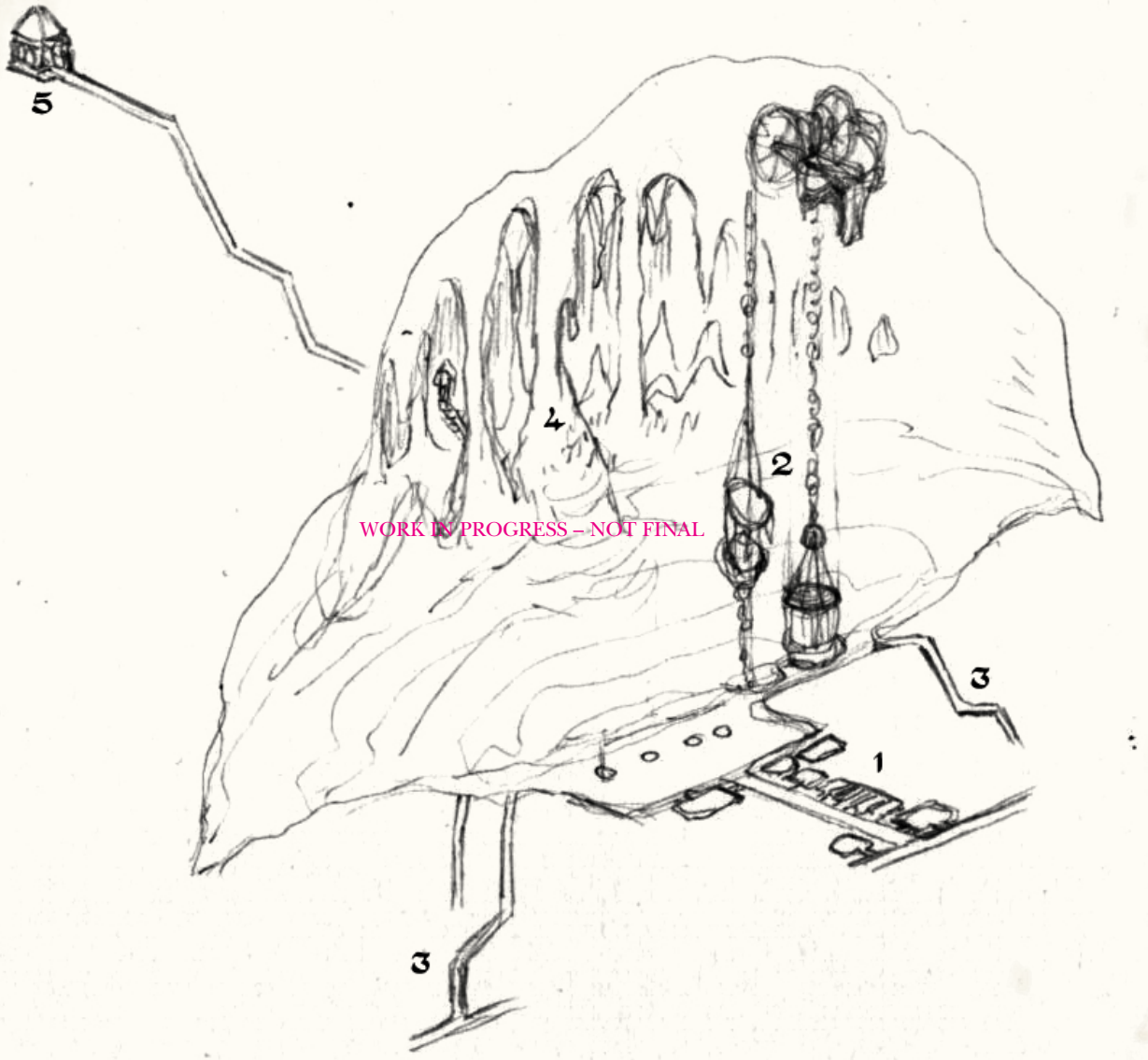
**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Crush 3 (6/12, Break Shield), Hurled Rock 2 (6/12)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Heartless.* This creature is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Invisible.* This creature is invisible, and AWARENESS, SCAN, and attack rolls against it *lose (2d)*, while the creature's attack rolls are *Favoured* and *gain (1d)* against Player-heroes who cannot see it. A Player-hero who obtains a Magical success on an AWARENESS or SCAN roll can see the creature normally and ignores all penalties for the rest of the fight.

*Lifeless.* Spend 1 Resolve to cancel a Wound. When an attack inflicts damage to the creature that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, spend 1 Resolve to bring the creature back to full Endurance again.

*Snap Blade.* When a close combat weapon scores a Piercing Blow against the Stone Ghost, spend 1 Resolve to break that weapon. This ability does not affect weapons with one or more Rewards (enchanted or otherwise).

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## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### THE MITHRIL OF NAN

There are three possible ways to recover the Mithril from Nan. One is to climb down the remaining chains and take the ore one stone at a time. Each ascent or descent is easy enough with **ATHLETICS**, but failure means a lethal fall — and failing with an ᚢ breaks one of the remaining chains.

The second approach is to deliberately break the platform, so it falls into the Mines far below — and then find where the ore landed and recover it. The third option is to repair the platform Gilim, bring it down until it is level with its broken counterpart, and then carry the ore across from broken Nan to the repaired Gilim.

The value in Treasure points of the Mithril that can be recovered from Nan is left to the Loremaster to evaluate — it should be great enough to make a Player-hero consider retiring (check the notes about the Campaign Focus on page XX for advice on how to handle Mithril in your campaign).

### DYING AT THE PILLARS OF FÁIN

Dwarves consider it holy to die at the Pillars of Fáin; if a Dwarf Player-hero perishes here, or is interred here in the same Adventuring Phase in which they perished, then it counts as if they had taken the *Raise an Heir* Fellowship Undertaking: the player names an heir (if they had not previously named one), and the heir's Previous Experience reserve is increased by a number of points equal to the Treasure points with which the Player-hero is buried (or 5, whichever is higher).

# West Moria

*Before him stood a wide dark arch opening into three passages: all led in the same general direction, eastwards; but the left-hand passage plunged down, while the right-hand climbed up, and the middle way seemed to run on, smooth and level but very narrow.*

The western portion of Moria was a stronghold in its own right, a Dwarf-hold the equal of any of the halls in the Blue Mountains or Iron Hills. It was in West Moria (*Dol Mírdan*, the Hill of Smiths, in Sindarin) that the Dwarves and Elves met in friendship, and together they made wonders. For a time, the lord of West Moria was a prince among the folk of Durin, second only to the king of the Dwarrowdelf. The reputation of Dol Mírdan was greatly enhanced by the presence of the Master-smith Narvi, who was acclaimed the greatest metallurgist and scholar born to the Dwarves since Telchar of Nogrod in the First Age. Narvi was exceedingly long-lived for a Dwarf, and continued his work long after the destruction of Eregion and the death of his friend Celebrimbor. It is said that Narvi became ever more eccentric and secretive, hiding away in his workshop for months on end, and binding his apprentices to secrecy with terrible oaths.

After the fall of Eregion, the importance of West Moria dwindled. There was still a little trade through the West-gate, but as the years went by, one by one the kingdoms of Eriador fell into ruin. West Moria turned inwards, and jealously guarded its own dwindling wealth and influence. The lords of Dol Mírdan became strange and troublesome, and there was much estrangement between the line of Kings and those lords. There were whispers that the lords of Dol Mírdan conspired with the descendants of those from Nogrod and Belegost, to weaken the hold of Durin's line on the Dwarrowdelf.

## The Imperishable Hall

– Obscure –

*Now as he came near, it was tinged with a flickering sparkle of many colours at the surface, reflected and splintered from the wavering light of his torch.*

### Rumour

*"The Dwarves of old were friendly with the Elves of Hollin, until they fought over a necklace or somesuch. Who can keep track of the ancient feuds of the Elder folk? But there was a Dwarf-hall of renown in the western portion of Moria."*

### Old Lore

*"Nyi Daughter of Nithi was a Dwarven queen, and she ruled in the west of Moria even after the fall of the Dwarrowdelf. She was famed for her pride, and it is whispered she even defied the commands of King Thráin."*

### Background

The title "the Imperishable Hall" was given to the Fiftieth Hall long ago, when it was decorated with crystal mirrors of Ithildin, and the Dwarf-poets held that it resembled a diamond. However, the name became a boast — or a curse — in the last days of Moria, as the Queen of the Hall chose the security of her position over the good of all Dwarves.

In the year 1980 of the Third Age, in the dreadful year when Durin's Bane awoke and the Dwarrowdelf fell, the ruler of West Moria was Nyi, Daughter of Nithi. The alarm was first raised by hammered messages along the Road, and then a handful of survivors staggered into the city, bringing word of

fire and shadow engulfing the underground complex behind them. Nyi ordered the Road to be shut and the Gates sealed, to protect her people from the catastrophe that had engulfed the Dwarrowdelf. Many Dwarves cried out against this, for Nyi's command meant that any others fleeing along the Road would be unable to escape, but she held firm — and soon afterwards, the Roadwarden reported *'fire and darkness'* assailing the doors. Durin's Bane came to the very threshold of West Moria — and came no further. The horror withdrew, and West Moria was spared.

It was the belief of Nyi and her followers that theirs was the last bastion of Khazad-dûm, and it was not until months later that they learned from travellers coming over the Dimrill Stair that though Durin VI was dead, his son Náin still lived and sought to retake the city. Nyi sent troops from West Moria over the mountains to aid Náin, but they arrived too late — or, some say, she delayed in sending them, dooming Náin. Nyi invited Náin's son, the young king Thráin I, to dwell with her in West Moria so he could continue his father's campaign to reclaim the city, but Thráin (perhaps fearing treachery) refused and departed for the place that became known as the Mansions of Thráin (see page XX).

The population of West Moria grew for a little while, as other survivors of the disaster dwelt there for a few years before setting off East or West, and Nyi styled herself Queen of Moria in Thráin's absence. By the year 1999, though, Thráin had founded a new kingdom at Erebor, and the survivors of Moria flocked to the Lonely Mountain. West Moria was now but a doorway to a tomb, and Queen Nyi's reputation was marred by her treatment of the kings; her people abandoned her, leaving only a handful of Dwarves living in West Moria.

The final date of the outpost's abandonment is not known, but was likely between the years 2000 and 2200. Scouts from the Blue Mountains reported finding the Doors of Durin closed, but the great Gate leading to the road — the same Gate that had been sealed since the fall of Moria — was open. Did the last inhabitant of West Moria set off down that dark and silent road to Durin's Bane?

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE IMPERISHABLE HALL

The seat of the Lords of West Moria, the Imperishable Hall was famed for its walls, which were adorned with panels of cut crystal and gems backed with polished Ithildin. It was said that the light of a single lamp could illuminate the whole hall, for its light would be reflected and refracted endlessly. The Dwarves held that no evil could enter the Imperishable Hall, for the place was blessed with the light.

The Hall still stands — it can be found only a short distance from the Doors of Durin — but the jewelled panels are gone. There are no signs of violent removal, so they were not wrenched out of the wall by rapacious Orcs. Perhaps an enterprising thief could have made off with one or two of the thousand jewels, but to remove all of them would require the efforts of a great many skilled craftsmen. If the panels were ever found, and set back in the proper configuration calculated by Narvi, the Imperishable Hall could be remade once again.

### 2. GUEST-HALLS

Airy, well-lit chambers made for the comfort of Elves and Men. The air shafts here are slanted less steeply than in other places, to admit the long light of the setting sun; however, this means they are much more overgrown with weeds than other shafts, and this hardy greenery spills into the halls. Anyone exploring these chambers must hack their way through dead gorse-bushes and other plants.

### 3. THE WEST-MARKET

This grand hall was used by traders and merchants. It was renowned for its unique ceiling: a crystal dome lit by a central light-shaft; the rays of the sun would be refracted through the crystals and bathe the hall below in soft light.

Goblins blocked the shaft and cracked the crystals, and now huge chunks of broken crystals sit precariously in the heights. The slightest vibration might cause part of the ceiling to fall in.

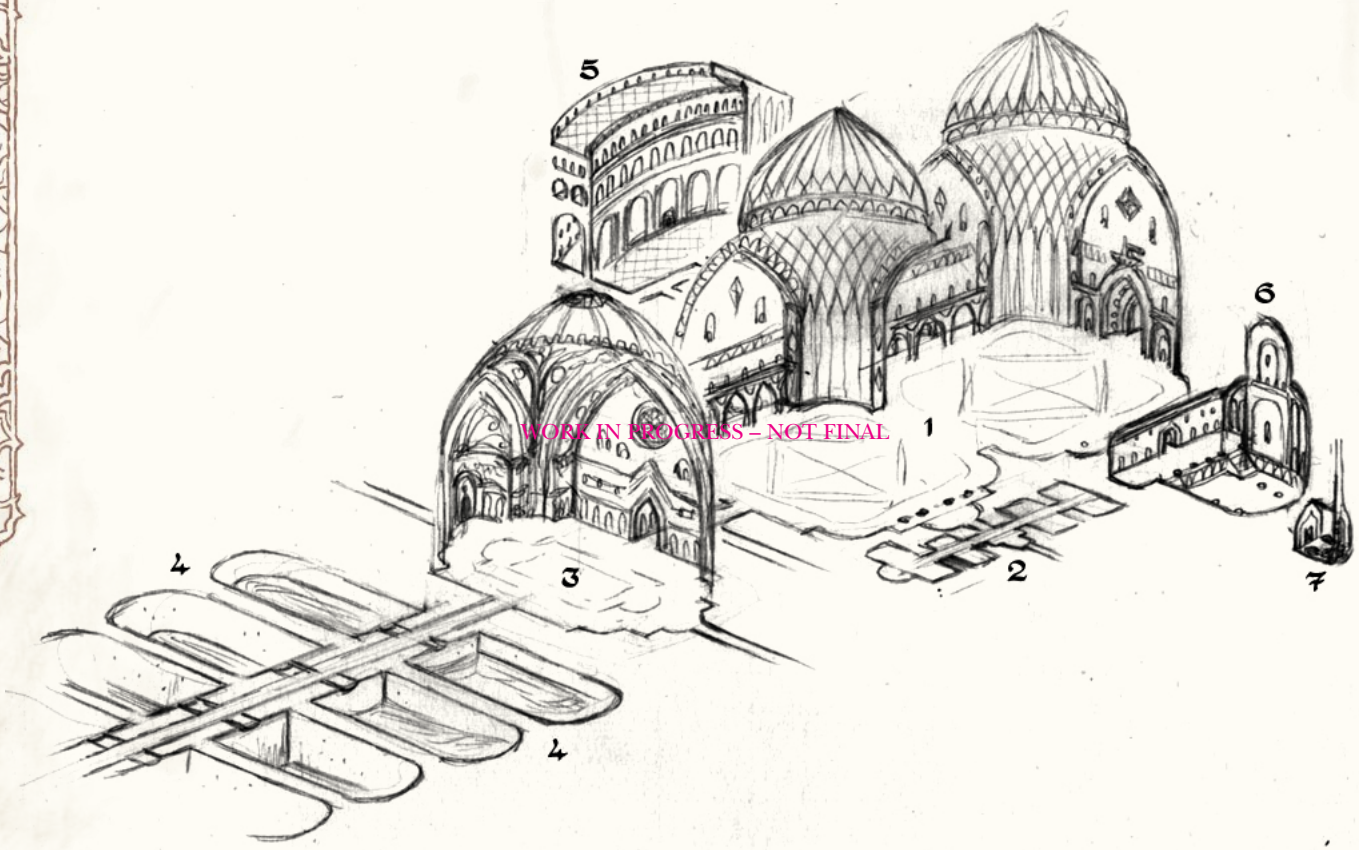
### 4. THE GRANARIES OF THE WEST

The Dwarrowdelf always relied on food imported from farmlands in the Vales of Anduin — but also in the lands of the west, from the farmlands around Tharbad and Swanfleet. These huge granary-pits once held thousands of tons of grain. Now, they are flooded with stagnant water and slime. Cave-fish splash here.

### 5. THE ARCHIVES OF NYI

In years past, the inhabitants of West Moria had the reputation of being great scholars. Their friendship with the Elves of Eregion led to many Dwarves studying the Elven-tongue. They transcribed many tales of the Elder Days, including descriptions of wonders and works now drowned under the Western Seas.

The library of West Moria was raided not by Orcs, but by Dwarves. Thieves raided the place after the Battle of Five Armies, when many of Moria's Orcs were away fighting in the far north. The books and records are now scattered across Dwarf-holds and in the hands of traders throughout Eregion. Technically, possession of these books is theft — they belong to King Dáin, for Nyi perished without heir — so they are not sold openly.

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### 6. THE CHAMBERS OF NARVI

Brilliant beyond compare was the mind of Narvi. His greatest accomplishment was in metallurgy — in the making of new alloys and new forms of Mithril he had no peer. Celebrimbor and his jewel-smiths forged the Rings of Power, but it was Narvi who provided the materials for their work. Narvi was accomplished in other crafts, too — in stone-working, in the scriving of runes, in the invention of machines. Master Narvi was exceedingly long-lived for a Dwarf ("well preserved", one might say); so much so that he outlived his immortal friend Celebrimbor. Narvi was too old to fight when Hollin was attacked, and he wept bitterly when news came that the Elven-realm had fallen.

The loss of Celebrimbor overthrew Narvi's mind, but not his genius. Though he lived for many more years, he never left his chambers again, and locked himself away with his work until he died at his work-bench. In those days he wrought many wonders, driven by an obsessive desire to create. The Lords of West Moria preserved the Chambers of Narvi as they were when he perished (partly because Narvi sowed traps and concealed many of his works behind riddles and hidden doors).

Orcs have despoiled much of these chambers; even they knew the value of Narvi's work.

### 7. THE FORGE OF NARVI

The Forge of Narvi remains undisturbed, for it is locked away behind an enchanted door. The door is a slab of black stone, without mark or keyhole — unless it is touched by one who speaks the tongue of the High-elves, in which case the symbol of a holly tree appears, drawn in Ithildin. The door still does not open; it requires a password, which is the name of *Celebrimbor*. Beyond lies Narvi's workshop — and his forge.

The forge grants Blessings to **CRAFT** rolls made here. It contains many tools and devices of great use, including all the equipment needed to refine and process all varieties of Mithril.

## Schemes and Troubles

### THE RINGS OF NYI

The name of the last ruler of West Moria is infamous among the Dwarves. It was Nyi who closed the Road, Nyi who failed to honour King Náin's call to arms. Her name is a byword for ambition and treachery. Even after a thousand years, the sins of Nyi are neither forgotten nor forgiven.

But her kinfolk do not imagine the fire of Nyi's ambition. She had the Ring-smiths of the Citadel (see page XX) make her a set of rings with a singular curse — the rings belonged to her, no matter who bore them. Thus, if someone puts on a Ring of Nyi, her thoughts infect them, whispering in their dreams and shaping their waking deeds until they become copies of her, their minds overthrown by the desires of a long-dead Dwarf. They do not become *possessed*, per se — more that their thoughts and memories get progressively overwritten by those of Nyi.

It may have been Nyi's plan to scatter these rings in Moria as traps for Durin's Bane — if the monster could not be defeated through force of arms, then perhaps it could be defeated through magic. Or maybe Nyi, childless and heirless, intended to preserve her line through any means necessary, even if that meant taking another's body.

At least three Shadows of Nyi have arisen in the last millennium. The first was an Orc who arrived at the door of a Dwarf-hold in the Blue Mountains, insisting he was *"the Queen of Dol Mírdan"* and demanding entry. The second was a Dwarven explorer who found a ring in the mines, and cast himself into a pit rather than become Nyi. The third was a sage in the Blue Mountains, who tried wearing the ring carried by the Orc; he too lost his mind, but his relatives had the presence of mind to imprison and question 'Nyi'.

A Ring of Nyi is a Cursed Ring that grants Blessings to **INSIGHT** and **RIDDLE**; however, if the wearer suffers a Bout of Madness, 'Nyi' takes over their body for a time.

Nyi does know certain vital secrets about Moria — including the spell to open the doors of the Citadel of the Ring-Smiths.

# The Lost Citadel of the Ring-smiths

– hidden –

*In Eregion long ago many Elven-rings were made, magic rings as you call them, and they were, of course, of various kinds: some more potent and some less. The lesser rings were only essays in the craft before it was full-grown, and to the Elven-smiths they were but trifles — yet still to my mind dangerous for mortals. But the Great Rings, the Rings of Power, they were perilous.*

### RUMOUR

*"There was great friendship between the Elves of Eregion and the Dwarves of Moria, and many rings were given in token of friendship. Some the Elves made, but others were Dwarf-work."*

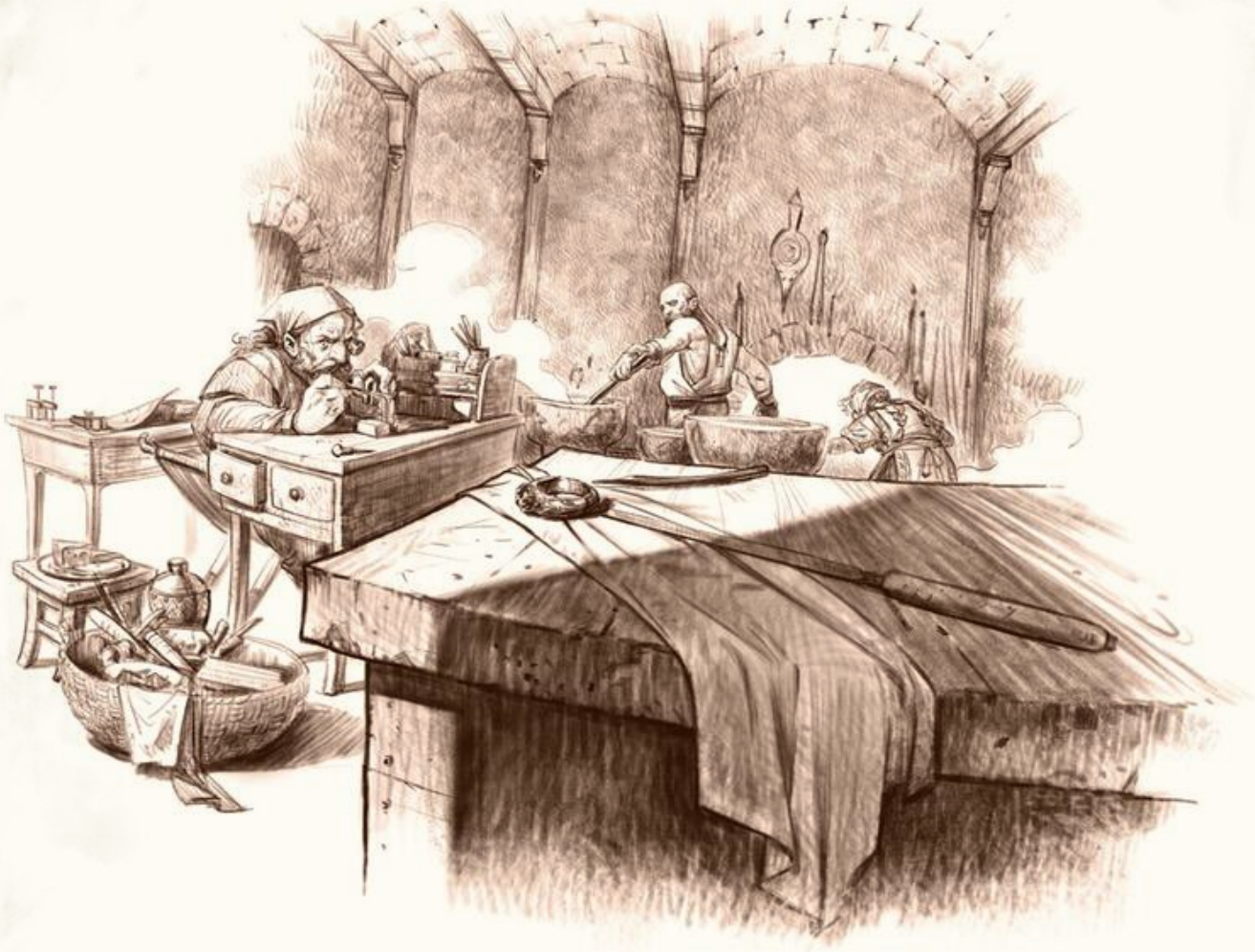
### OLD LORE

*"It is said that the folk of Narvi aided the Elves in the making of rings, supplying them with gemstones and metal and other materials. The Dwarves were rumoured to have pursued the making of rings even after the fall of Eregion, and some tales even claim that Elves fleeing the Dark Lord took refuge under the Mountain. But no evidence for these wild accounts has ever been found."*

## Background

The Wise know the history well — the Elves, aided and guided by Sauron in disguise — made the Rings of Power, and were then betrayed. Sauron forged the Ruling Ring to take control of the other Rings, but the Elves hid the Three from him. Sauron took the remaining Rings of Power, the Seven and the Nine, and gave them to the Dwarf-lords and Kings of Men to trap them. Eregion was destroyed, and the Rings scattered, lesser and Great alike.

The Dwarves of Dol Mírdan had aided in the making of the rings, and had been rewarded with many lesser rings as gifts. Some of the Elves who escaped the destruction of Hollin



took refuge in Moria for a time, and they brought with them more magic rings, and such material and unfinished work as they could salvage from the ruins of Ost-in-Edhil. By the end of the War of the Elves and Sauron in the year 1701 of the Second Age, the Dwarves had gathered more ring-lore to themselves than existed anywhere else in Middle-earth.

Narvi cautioned against pursuing the craft of ring-making. First, the making of rings demanded much of the maker's spirit, and the spirits of Dwarves are not like those of Elves. Second, as long as Sauron held the Ruling Ring, any ring was a potential trap for the wearer.

But the Lords of Dol Mírdan did not wholly heed this warning, and established a secret forge and laboratory to study the art of ring-making. For centuries, Dwarven-smiths strove to make new Rings of Power. Their early successes, while few in number, came with the aid of the Elves who fled Sauron and took refuge in the Mountain — but the fear was that any rings they made would fall under the rule of the One Ring — a fear that deepened when the first Ringwraiths appeared. The Citadel was shuttered then, and the master craftsmen turned to the making of ordinary rings.

It was not until the middle years of the Third Age that work resumed, as the world outside Moria seemed to decline and the kingdoms of Men foundered. Believing that the strength of new rings was needed to revive the fortunes of Middle-earth, a new generation of Ring-smiths began to work.

The results were uneven; as Narvi warned, ring-making took a toll on the smiths, draining them of vitality and eventually turning them into cold wights (see page XX). Even these sacrifices did not produce new Rings of Power, but the Dwarves did manage to produce lesser rings of varying quality. They continued their work right up until the end — and even after, hoping to forge a ring that could bind Durin's Bane.

*But I rode to the foot of Orthanc; and there he met me and led me up to his high chamber. He wore a ring on his finger.*

The Citadel of the Ring-smiths was kept secret. Few knew the place even existed, and far fewer knew where it was located in West Moria. All the doors were hidden with runes of concealment, and its architects and builders were sworn to utmost secrecy. It might be found by chance, or by laboriously piecing together fragments of lore in the records of the smiths and masons of the city.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE OUTER CITADEL

While the Citadel itself is secret, these outer chambers were once mansions belonging to individual master Ring-smiths. While these rooms have been looted by Orcs and thieves over the centuries and little treasure remains, it is clear at a glance that Dwarves of great wealth once dwelt here. Examining carvings and crumbling frescos discovers images of Dwarf-lords and smiths seated on thrones; a successful **SCAN** roll may reveal that in every image, the Dwarf-lord wears a ring, and there is always a tiny gemstone or fleck of polished metal of a different substance to distinguish the ring from the rest of the artwork — as if signifying that these rings are of a different order to the rest.

The invisible Goblins of Goblin Village found their rings here (see page XX).

### 2. THE DOOR OF THE RING-SMITHS

The corridor here ends in a blank wall of stone. The skeleton of a tall Man lies against the wall; the remnants of his mismatched armour suggests he was once a warrior of note. A broken sword lies close by. With his last strength, he scratched a rough circle into the stone, and what might be a rune (<). That rune stands for 's' or 'h' in different traditions.

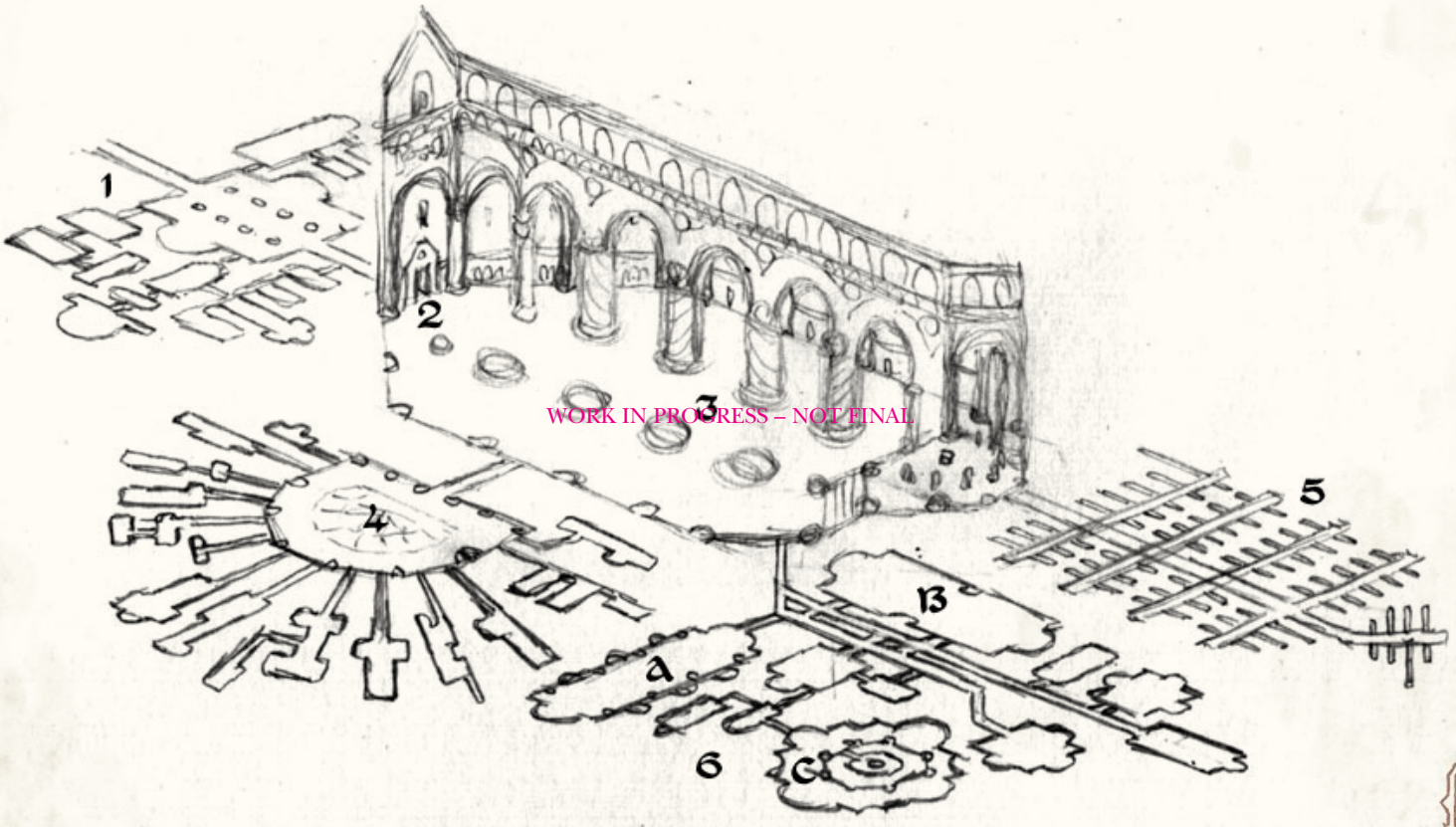
A close examination can detect the faintest outline of a hidden Dwarf-door, but there is no concealed keyhole, and no runes appear to hint at the method for opening it.

If a magic ring is tapped against the stone, these words appear:

THIS YOU ARE AND TO THIS YOU RETURN

The answer is 'stone', although it must be the Khuzdul word for stone, spoken in the secret tongue of the Dwarves.

Opening the door counts as a really powerful spell, causing the one who does so to gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery) and increasing the Company's Eye Awareness by 3 — plus the next revelation episode should come from the *Ghâsh* list.




WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

### WHERE DO WE GET A MAGIC RING?

The Door of the Ring-smiths presents a challenge for the Company; how do they get into the treasure-trove of magic rings if opening it requires a magic ring? There are several rings to be found elsewhere in Moria, such as the Ring of Keys (see page XX), the Goblin-rings of Invisibility (see page XX), the Ring of Nyi (see page XX), Thu's Ring (see page XX) and Har's Ring (see page XX).

Player-heroes might also find a ring while adventuring, or be gifted a ring by a Patron (likely, Saruman the White).

## 3. HALL OF THE RING-SMITHS

The door opens onto the Hall of the Ring-smiths, a place of staggering beauty. This is Khazad-dûm as it was at the height of its wealth and power. Unbroken lamps of crystal blaze, illuminating a hall of black marble where twisted pillars support a roof of silver. Seven great thrones are arranged in a staggered wedge at one end of the hall, around a small plinth wrought of Mithril where rings were once laid. The rotten remnants of perished velvet cushions are one of the few reminders that this place has been left empty and abandoned for a thousand years.

Searching the halls, it is clear that there were Dwarves living here until the very end — it contains the remnants of food in the pantry, moth-eaten scraps of clothing and the like. But there are no skeletons or other remains.

## 4. THE WORKSHOPS

Here the Ring-smiths sought to recreate the works of the Elves of Eregion. Each Ring-smith had their own workshop off a central chamber. Each one endeavoured to reach complete mastery of one particular skill — as the song says "*There hammer on the anvil smote, There chisel clove and graver wrote.*" So too did gem-cutters scrape and polish, and artisans twisted gold and Mithril into fine filigree.

Now, all the workshops are empty and dark, their crystal lamps snuffed out — all save one. The Ring-smiths went on working even as Moria fell around them, seeking to make a ring that could defeat Durin's Bane. They sealed the door so they would not be disturbed, and worked even as they ran out of food. One by one they perished, giving their lives to the craft, and their fellow smiths laid them to rest in the vaults below, until only one was left. The Master-smith Fraegr continued her work until her very last breath.

Her corpse slumps over her workbench, and in her skeletal hand she clutches a magic ring. The last ring is not yet finished — there are three rubies that were clearly intended to be inset into the ring, but Fraegr died before she could place them in their sockets. If a smith wishes to finish the Last Ring, see *Forging the Last Ring*, on page XX.

## 5. THE LIBRARY OF THE RING-SMITHS

Here is preserved more ring-lore and secrets of the Elven-smiths of Eregion than anywhere else in Middle-earth. The majority of the books here are written in the Elven-tongue, for the high speech is more suited for such work than any tongue of Dwarf or Man. For security, the books are all chained to their shelves; even a master of the citadel had to request that a book be unlocked.

Unlike certain other records, some of these books were written on perishable parchment, and time has gnawed them. Still, many secrets of the elder days are preserved here. The grandest tome is the compiled *Annals of the Gwaith-i-Mirdáin*, the Annals of the Jewel-smiths, which contains first-hand accounts of the making of the Rings, transcriptions of conversations and tales told by Celebrimbor and the Lord of gifts, and detailed descriptions of both the lesser rings and the great Rings of Power (save, of course, the One Ring).

## 6. THE VAULTS OF THE RING-SMITHS

The Vaults contain the treasures of the Ring-smiths — and their secret shame.

**6A:** As Narvi warned, put too much of yourself into the ring, and you risk becoming a thrall. Many of the Ring-smiths became Ring-wights, and were imprisoned in these secret vaults after death. Most of the Ring-wights were laid to rest in sealed caskets, marked with runes of command to keep them from wandering. However, the corpses of the last Ring-smiths were also placed here by Fraegr, and she simply laid them on the ground. If a living creature enters this chamber, these Ring-wights awaken, and the clamour of combat may cause the other Wights to claw their way out of their caskets.

**6B:** This storeroom contains raw materials for the making of rings — ingots of precious metal, cut and uncut gemstones, rare oils, powders and acids for etching and so forth. There are at least 3 Success Dice worth of Treasure here per Player-hero. Alas, the Mithril that was stored here is all exhausted.

**6C:** This treasure-vault contains a Greater Hoard; any wondrous items found here are, of course, rings.

## Schemes and Troubles

### The Discovery of the Citadel

Between the Undead Ring-wights in the Vaults, and the sudden jump in Eye Awareness as soon as the Door is opened, the Player-heroes will come under assault as soon as they find the Citadel — and the books in the library are remarkably dry and flammable. Even if the Company defeats the initial assault, other foes will soon arrive, like flies drawn to honey.

The Citadel is intended to be a place of wonder and horror that the heroes visit once, not a place to reclaim and rebuild. If they stay here, hit them with Durin's Bane.

### *Ring-wight*

Dwarves wearing Rings of Power do not thin or fade — instead, they are consumed from within, becoming hollow husks who hunger for the life force of the living.

**RING-WIGHT**
Doleful, Dreadful

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 6

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | 1 | 6 | – | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Ancient Hammer 3 (6/16, Break Shield)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Deathless.* Spend 1 Hate to cancel a Wound. When an attack inflicts damage to the creature that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, spend 1 Hate to bring the creature back to full Endurance again. This ability is ineffective against Player-heroes wielding a magical weapon enchanted with spells for the Bane of the Undead.

*Dreadful Spells.* Spend 1 Hate to make one Player-hero gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery). Targets who fail their Shadow test or who are Miserable fall victim to Moria-madness (see page XX) and may only be restored to reality with an ENHEARTEN roll. Otherwise, they wander blinded by glory for one hour.

*Hate Sunlight.* The creature loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Heartless.* The creature is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Thing of Terror.* At the start of the first round of the battle all Player-heroes in sight of one or more creatures with this ability gain 3 Shadow points (Dread). Those who fail their Shadow test are daunted and cannot spend Hope for the rest of the fight.

### RING-LORE OF THE MASTER-SMITHS

The books in the library gathered here contain secrets on the making of rings that have been preserved nowhere else in Middle-earth. They are priceless, but there are few left who could understand what is written within them, and fewer who could make use of that knowledge. Should the Player-heroes secure any of the books here, where do they take them? Saruman, certainly, covets the Rings and has the skill to employ this lore. There are Elven-smiths in Elrond's household who might be able to forge new rings, but anything they make would risk falling under the sway of the Ruling Ring, so it would be folly. The Dwarves of Erebor are unlikely to have the power to make new rings (although a ring made with gold and jewels taken from the drowned corpse of the last of the Great Wyrms might have a certain potency). There are no Men in Middle-earth with the power to forge a ring, though there might be ambitious lords in Gondor or Umbar who would purchase the books.

Sauron, of course, knows more about ring-making than any other entity in all of Middle-earth. He needs not the books of the Dwarves; he is already the Lord of the Rings.

### FORGING THE LAST RING

The Last Ring was intended to be a weapon against the Balrog; it imbues the wearer with protection against fire and darkness. In game terms, it makes the wearer immune to the *Denizen of the Dark* Fell Ability and to any Endurance loss from fire, and imbues whatever weapon the wearer wields with the *Bane of the Enemy*.

Completing the Last Ring requires a Daunting Skill Endeavour (Resistance 9) using **CRAFT**. There is no time limit, but the smith must put a measure of their spirit into the ring as they make it; each Skill roll made on this Endeavour causes the smith to gain 1 Shadow Scar. Remaking the Ring also requires a small amount of True Mithril.

# The Doors of Durin

– famous –

*"They say only: The Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria. Speak, friend, and enter. And underneath small and faint is written: I, Narvi, made them. Celebrimbor of Hollin drew these signs."*

### RUMOUR

*"The west door of Moria lies near the source of the Sirannon — if it still exists. Most likely it was buried under stone long ago, when the Dwarves turned their faces from Eriador."*

### OLD LORE

*"It is said that the west-door of Moria is hidden, and can only be found by the Wise — but it still exists. It may be opened with a thrust from the far side."*

## Background

The fabled Doors of Durin mark the western end of Moria. Two ancient holly-trees, gifts of the Elves of Eregion, flank the doors. The doors are invisible when closed, but they are inlaid with Ithildin that reflects starlight when woken by the touch of an Elf or Elf-friend. When made visible, the doors are seen to bear four symbols — two trees bearing crescent moons, the Star of the House of Fëanor, the anvil and hammer of the Dwarves, and the crown of Durin.

The doors are unbreakable by virtually any force left in Middle-earth; Sauron's armies could not break them in the War of the Elves, and he doubtless had Mountain-trolls and worse things in his host. When closed, the only way to open them from the outside is to speak the password. The doorwardens could also bar the door from the inside, of course — Sauron's army was not stymied for years because of a simple riddle!

From the inside, the doors can be opened with a simple thrust. They are heavy enough that few can manage the effort alone, and in days past doorwardens were stationed here to aid travellers wishing to pass west. Now that Moria is abandoned, a lone traveller risks being stuck behind the doors if they lack the strength to open them.

## Locations

### 1. The Walls of Moria

The sheer mountainside here is known as the Walls of Moria; no enemy ever broke through those walls.

### 2. The Doors of Durin

The Doors of Durin, also called the West-gate of Moria, lie here. A successful **SCAN** test is needed to identify the spot in the cliff face where the doors lie; even then, the Ithildin inscription *"sleeps until it is touched by one who speaks words now long forgotten in Middle-earth,"* requires a successful **CRAFT** or **LORE** roll to read.

### 3. The Gate-stream

Sirannon, the Gate-stream as it was called, is fast and noisy. It runs down from the heights and then flows along a trench that runs parallel to the main road until it plunges down again over the stair falls.

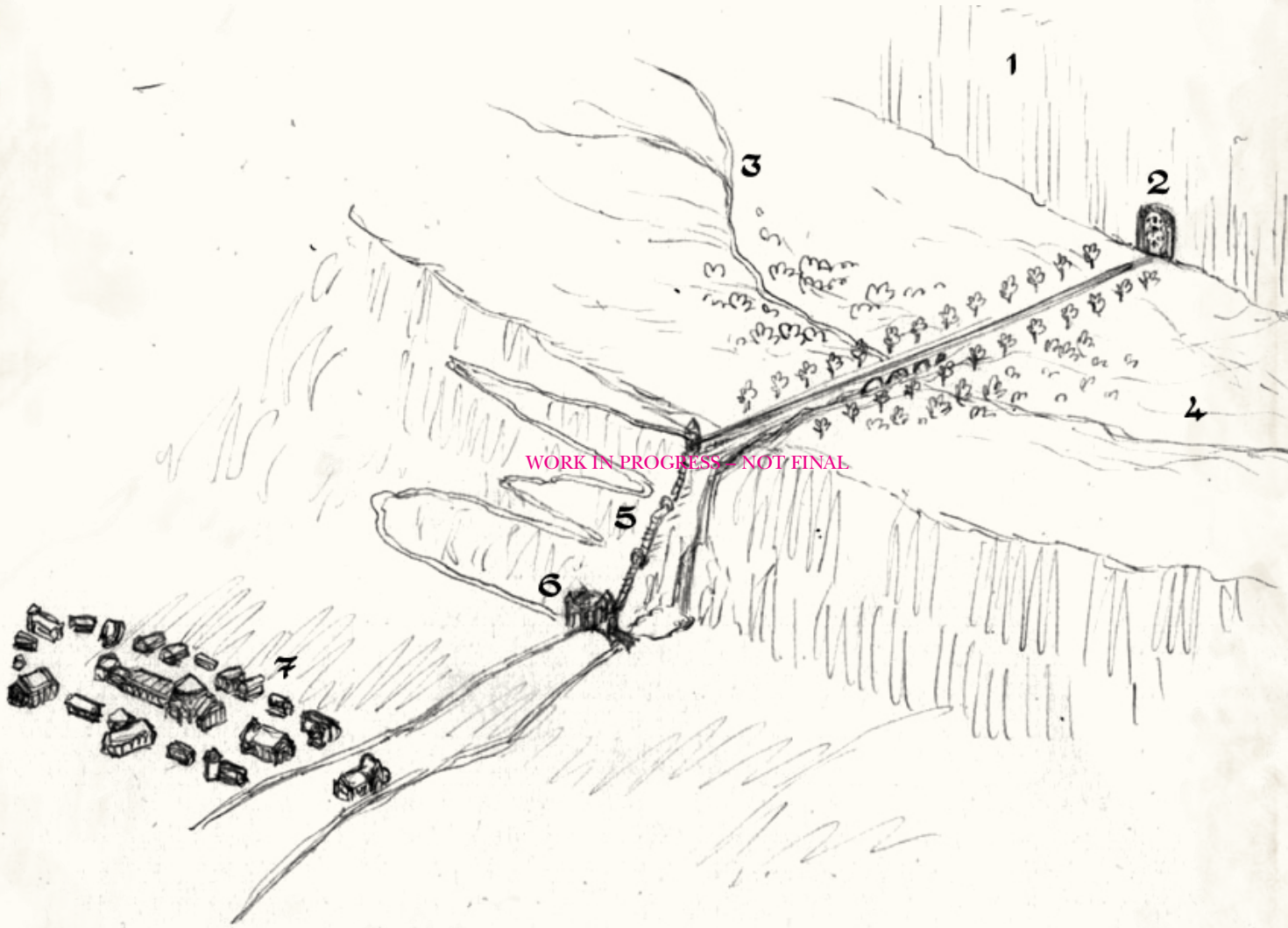
### 4. VALLEY OF WELCOMES

In the year 2965, this valley is still dry, the Sirannon undammed, and holly trees grow here in profusion. Long ago, two parallel rows of holly trees ran alongside the road straight to the west-door; now, they have seeded a whole forest in the sheltered vale between the arms of the mountains.

Use this example to remind Player-heroes that Moria changes. The sight of the two holly trees flanking the door by the stagnant pool is one of the most famous images from *The Lord of the Rings* — describing the west-door as hidden among thickets of greenery is a great way to emphasise that the game takes place decades before the events of the War of the Ring.

### 5. THE STAIR FALLS

Here, the main road descends in several long loops to the lowlands below; hasty travellers can take the steep steps cut into the rock alongside the river.




WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FINAL

### 6. THE CAMP OF THE STAIR FALLS

It was long the custom of the Dwarves to visit the holy ground of Moria. Now, up until the recent wars, Moria was much too dangerous for any Dwarf to approach, for the hills were full of Orcs and Goblins. The Dwarves, therefore, took to visiting the westernmost tip of Moria, far enough away from the doors that they could retreat in safety if assailed. Dwarven pilgrims can sometimes be found at the Camp of the Stair Falls, a fortified campsite by the banks of the Sirannon. From this staging post, they can complete the pilgrimage to the land of their ancestors. Enterprising peddlers at the camp sell genuine Moria-relics and trophies.

#### *Hornburi Whitebeard*

**Hornburi Whitebeard is a Dwarven scholar and trader who makes frequent visits to the Camp of the Stair Falls. Unlike other scholars in Erebor and the Blue Mountains, who pore over the tomes and ledgers carried out of Khazad-dûm before it fell, Hornburi studies Moria as it is now, piecing together what he can from rumours and the accounts of travellers and adventurers, trying to determine which parts of the ancient city have been destroyed beyond repair and which sections might one day be recovered. He knows that there are at least two different factions among the Orcs, one in the upper portion of the city, and one in the lower – and that deeper still there waits some terrible danger.**

**He also trades in relics recovered from Moria. Hornburi's relationship with the thieves of Tharbad (see page XX) is complex; he tries to keep on their good side by passing them treasures of little worth, while hiding the true treasures recovered from Moria and smuggling them back to the Blue Mountains.**

**OCCUPATION:** Wandering Scholar

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Inquisitive, Stern

### 7. THE MANSIONS OF THRÁIN I

These unremarkable stone cottages were used by Dwarven lookouts in ancient days, and of late have been used by travellers on the road. Few now know their history. It was here that King Thráin I, the young son of King Náin, dwelt for some years while he contemplated how Moria might be retaken. He quarrelled with Nyi of West Moria, which greatly delayed any attempt at reconquest — and that delay was terribly costly, for more of his followers drifted away to the safety of the Blue Mountains or to Dwarf-holds in Dunland.

It was here too that Thráin I brooded on old grudges, sitting up late into the night toying with a gold ring inherited from his father, until he recalled an old mining colony, long-abandoned, far to the east. That colony became the fabulously wealthy Kingdom of Erebor.

Stories claim that Thráin buried treasures taken from Moria somewhere near these mansions before he departed for the Lonely Mountain.

## Schemes and Troubles

### CHANGING THE WORDS

As the Player-heroes already know how to open the Doors of Durin, you may wish to change the password. Some suggestions:

- **A SPELL OF OPENING IS REQUIRED:** only a Magical Success using **CRAFT** can open the door.
- **A SECRET WORD IS REQUIRED:** the Company must discover this word in an ancient scroll kept in the Blue Mountains.
- **A SIGN OF FRIENDSHIP IS REQUIRED:** those who would enter must declare their peaceful intentions and swear to do no harm inside the city.
- **A MAGICAL SIGN IS REQUIRED:** only one who has studied the Elf-letters can draw the symbol that opens the door.
- **A CHOICE IS REQUIRED:** a Player-hero seeking entry must touch the right symbol. An Elf must touch one of the two trees, a Man one of the crescent moons, or a Dwarf the anvil. Only members of the royal houses may touch the Star or Crown. Touch the wrong symbol, and the door will not open for you.

### THE POOL AT THE WEST-GATE

The records of Balin's ill-fated expedition imply that the Orcs (or the Watcher in the Water) damaged the Gate-stream and created the deep, stagnant pool in order to trap the intruders in Moria. Conceivably, this tactic might be deployed against the Player-heroes — if they sufficiently annoy Malech or Gorgol, then the Orc-chieftain sends a band of Orcs west to seal the West-gate.

# The Deeps

*The power of Moria endured throughout the Dark Years and the dominion of Sauron, for though Eregion was destroyed and the gates of Moria were shut, the halls of Khazad-dûm were too deep and strong and filled with a people too numerous and valiant for Sauron to conquer from without.*

The Deeps of Khazad-dûm lie beneath the city. In ancient times, the Upper Deeps held many of the forges of the Dwarves, and the hammers never fell silent. Beneath them lie lower levels still, the old Lower Deeps. Untold generations of miners chased the veins of Mithril like hunters stalking prey through a forest of stone, delving mineshafts and galleries almost without end. As these upper mines were exhausted of ore, the mine-tunnels were reinforced and widened, and turned into dwelling-places and workshops for poorer Dwarves (many of whom hailed from the ruined cities of Nogrod and Belegost in the west).

The city above can be still appreciated as being carefully planned by its architects, even if a thousand years of war and neglect have ruined it. The Dwarrowdelf has many great boulevards and high-ceilinged halls, many open caverns or grand plazas, courtyards and crossroads, all once lit by brilliant lamps of crystal. The city below, though, was a dimly-lit maze even before the fall of Moria; its streets were not laid out according to any plan or scheme, but trace the paths of long-exhausted veins of ore. Venture below the Upper Deeps, and a traveller enters the most confusing and endless labyrinth in all of Middle-earth.

The making of the Upper Deeps began long ago, in the dark days after the passing of Durin I. The successor kings envisioned a grand project to inspire their people after the absence of the father of their people — and also sought to prepare Khazad-dûm for war, for those were the years when Morgoth had defeated all the Elves who opposed him, and was Master of Middle-earth. The Dwarves feared that the might of the Enemy would be turned on them, and that Khazad-dûm would be the last redoubt of the Free Peoples, the mountain an island in the darkness.

The Upper Deeps, then, are smithies, refineries, factories and workshops on a scale unimaginable outside the works of Númenor in the Second Age, an armoury ready to equip a great host with Dwarf-forged mail and spears in tremendous numbers. All these suits of ancient armour still lie in store here, unused for more than six thousand years, preserved in vaults of stone — unless the Orcs have found these treasures and stolen them.

The foundries of the Upper Deeps were astounding, too, in their hunger for charcoal and coke. The Dwarves stoked them hot, and molten metal flowed in a torrential river. All is silent and cold, now, of course — or almost all. The Goblins still use some of the forges to make mischief.

### SLAG-WORMS

*...until they cooled and lay like twisted dragon-shapes vomited from the tormented earth...*

The foundries of Moria were running full-blast when Durin's Bane arose, and the heat from the Balrog's wrath melted stone and steel alike. In places in the Deeps, a traveller may encounter these 'slag-forms' – long sinuous shapes of congealed slag that dripped down shafts and puddled in bizarre formations. The worms are just lumps of ore and ash, and cannot move – so any accounts by travellers of being stalked by writhing slag-worms must be the result of madness or mistaking one lump of ash for another.

The slag-worms are strangely unlucky – as they congealed in precarious places, there are many tales among the Orcs of opening some long-sealed door or knocking through a wall, only to 'release' a slag-worm that toppled down and crushed the unlucky intruder. The Orcs regard slag-worms as a bad omen.

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

# The Armouries of the Third Deep

– OBSCURE –

*Óin to seek for the upper armouries of Third Deep…*

### RUMOUR

*"The Dwarves of old forged mighty weapons, and laid them in store in an armoury deep beneath their city."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Armouries of the Third Deep were the heart of the Dwarven arsenal. Here were stored weapons and armour to equip a great army of Dwarves. Mail and helms they laid in store, axes and swords and spears innumerable. Here, too, they stored enchanted blades made by the masters of old; the peerless hand of Telchar, the matchless mind of Narvi, and the blessed works of Durin himself."*

## Background

The Armouries were more than just storehouses; here was where the Dwarven Tunnel-guards were stationed. These Dwarven warriors defended the city against attacks from below; though Moria's defences against attacks from without were impenetrable, the Dwarves feared that Goblins might creep in through unknown tunnels or undermine the city's gates.

The elite Tunnel-guards were specially trained and equipped for fighting in the darkness, with enchanted mattocks and shields bound in Moria-silver. When Durin's Bane awoke, the Tunnel-guard were called to the defence of their city, and they gave their lives bravely in the battle of the Poisoned Halls. The Armouries, though, remain mostly intact, protected by the very poison that slew the Tunnel-guards.

## Locations

### 1. THE MUSTERING-YARD

This wide hall is a cross-roads in Moria, designed so that troops could quickly be dispatched to anywhere in the city. When Durin's Bane arose, a host of warriors gathered here — and perished here, for none could stand against the Balrog's fiery presence.

Today, the Mustering-yard is held as a neutral ground between the Orcs of Udûn and the Orcs of Moria; should Malech need to confer with the Fire-priest Thu, they are likely to meet here.

### 2. THE UPPER GATEHOUSE

Mighty gates, blasted asunder by the Balrog. It is clear that the Armouries have been at least partially despoiled.

### 3. THE FIRST ARMOURY

The First Armoury has been stripped bare. All that remains here are endless shelves and racks where swords and axes were stored. The Orcs treasure Dwarf-made weapons and armour, although they adapt them to their own horrible tastes. Many bent blades, slathered in Orc-poison and caked in dried gore, are good Dwarven steel beneath the mischief.

### 4. THE BROKEN HALL

The Broken Hall was a museum commemorating the battles where warriors from Khazad-dûm had fought and died. It was called 'Broken' because the Dwarves venerate the weapons and armour of the fallen; here they displayed sundered shields, broken swords, cloven helms, splintered spears, notched axes and other weapons that had served well unto the end. Behind each relic, Dwarven artisans painted grand murals depicting heroic deeds — the battles against Morgoth, wars against Orcs and Dragons, the fall of Eregion, the War of the Last Alliance.

The Orcs have despoiled all this, of course; they toppled the displays of broken weapons and trampled the relics into the dirt. They smashed and defiled all the murals, and set up mocking tributes to Dwarven victories. Now there are crudely made depictions of the death of King Thrór, the fall of Moria, and other Dwarven defeats. At one end of the hall is a huge Orc-painting of a demonic figure — it might be Sauron, or Morgoth, or the Balrog, or an imagined 'dark lord' — laying waste to Middle-earth.

The sight of the despoiled hall is worth 1 point of Shadow (Dread), or 2 points for Dwarves.

A successful **SCAN** test finds a crude Orc-painting depicting cornered Dwarves starving in an underground hall; despite the primitive rendition, the image of the door is recognizable as early-era architecture, suggesting these Dwarves perished in Old Moria. One of the Dwarves wears a crown — this is a depiction of the Last Redoubt of the Dwarves (see page XX).

### 5. THE SECOND ARMOURY

The second armoury, like the first, has been looted by the Orcs. Their efforts here, however, were not as thorough as in the first hall, and it is still possible to find some ancient weapons among the debris with a successful **SCAN** test. The Second Armoury also held specialised war-gear — if the Player-heroes for some reason need a battering ram or parts of a siege engine, they can find such things here.

### 6. THE HALL OF THE MAULER

A gigantic armoured Great Cave-troll dwells here. When it was young, it grew to a prodigious size, and was so large and fearsome that it never lost a fight. Azog recruited the Troll as a prized champion. However, in the battle of Dimrill Dale, it was wounded by a heroic Dwarf, and for the first time in its life the Troll knew pain. It fled the field and came here to the armouries. Ever since, it has been obsessed with protecting itself from further injury, and now wears an absurd pile of ironmongery strapped to every inch of its hide.

## *The Mauler*

**Despite its obsession with self-protection, the Mauler knows that the best defence is to crush your enemies to a pulp as swiftly as possible. If attacked, it will try to kill one of the aggressors as gruesomely as possible, believing that this might convince the others to flee (it's a tactic that worked more often than not).**

**THE MAULER**
Brutish, Lumbering

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 10

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 80 | 2 | 10 | – | 5 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Crush 3 (6/12, Seize), Maul 3 (8/16, Break Shield)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Dull-Witted.* Player-heroes can attempt a special combat task against the creature while in Forward stance. The acting player makes a **RIDDLE** roll as the main action for the round; on a success the Mauler loses 1 point of Hate, plus 1 point for each Success icon ᘔ.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Mauler that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the Mauler is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Strike Fear.* Spend 1 Hate to make all Player-heroes in sight gain 2 Shadow points (Dread). Those who fail their Shadow test are daunted and cannot spend Hope for the rest of the fight.

*Thick Hide.* Spend 1 Hate point to *gain (2d)* on a Protection roll.

### 7. THE POISONED HALLS

Once the Twelfth and Fourteenth Halls of Second Deep, here it is where Dwarven captains met in council — and where they made their stand against Durin's Bane. The Balrog unleashed a terrible poison upon them, a noxious breath that no helm nor face-mask could guard against. The bodies of the flower of Dwarven knighthood still lie where they fell as though sleeping, preserved against rot and vermin by the very poison that slew them. These halls contain many treasures — maps of the city and the ancient world, treatises on siege-craft and building, texts on fighting techniques and battles fought and won.

Searching the chamber discovers an unfinished letter, scribbled on a scrap of paper a thousand years ago and preserved by the poison. It reports that the Marshal of the Armies has fallen in battle in the Sixteenth Hall of the Fifth Deep, and his key has been lost with him. The King must send his key to the Armoury immediately so they can… — and there the letter ends with a scrawl as the scribe died.

See *The Poison of the Armouries*, on page XX.

### 8. THE UPPER ARMOURY

The Upper Armoury is mostly intact — because it too is poisoned. The corpses of Goblins lie scattered near the entranceway, overcome by the substance that lingers here. Player-heroes who rush in and brave the poison can grab Dwarf-forged weapons and armour from the racks here; the weapons are well-made but unexceptional, for the true treasures are stored on the level below.

### 9. THE KING'S DOOR

The door leading to the Lower Armoury bears the Crown-and-Anvil of Durin, flanked by images of Dwarven heroes in full armour. This door requires a key to open, and such keys were held only by the King and the Marshal of the Armies of the City. The King's key is in the Last Redoubt (see page XX); the Marshal's key was taken by Goblins down to Goblin Village (see page XX).

### 10. THE LOWER ARMOURY

The Lower Armoury holds the martial treasures of the Dwarves. At the very least, it is a Greater Hoard that contains at least three Famous Weapons or Armour; if Durin's Axe survives to the present day, it is here.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### THE POISON OF THE ARMOURIES

The Balrog's poison is dreadful beyond imagining. It counts as a grievous Endurance loss from poison, but those exposed must roll for damage every minute. If the Player-heroes take careful precautions — all skin covered, a wet cloth across the mouth, chewing healing herbs — then the poison becomes severe (roll each hour).

### DURIN'S AXE

According to the traditions of the Longbeards, the Axe of Durin was forged in the Elder Days of the world by Aulë the Smith. The axe was the weapon of the Kings, and was wielded by the King or by his champion in the defence of the city. It is a Great Axe with the Rune-scored, Superior Grievous and Superior Keen Enchanted Rewards. If a Dwarf wields it, the Axe also immediately displays the Flame of Hope and Gleam of Terror Enchanted Rewards (they do not need to be unlocked).

Claiming Durin's Axe raises the Eye Awareness of the Company by 4 instantly.

# GOBLIN VILLAGE

– hidden –

*Swish, smack! Whip crack!*
*Batter and beat! Yammer and bleat!*
*Work, work! Nor dare to shirk,*
*While Goblins quaff, and Goblins laugh,*
*Round and round far underground Below, my lad!*

### RUMOUR

*"There's a Goblin market down in the depths, where they trade stolen treasures and make merry."*

### OLD LORE

None.

## BACKGROUND

Although Goblin Village is technically a Hidden Landmark, that is only for outsiders. Every Goblin in the Misty Mountains knows this place. Goblin Village is the only place close to a neutral settlement that Moria has; neutral, that is, if you are an Orc. It is located in the Lower Deeps, in an old Dwarven market square. The Goblins have riddled the place with tunnels leading down into the Mines. These delvings connect to other, deeper tunnels — one winding north towards Goblin Town and Mount Gundabad, the other running south, slipping through the guts of the mountains until it emerges in a dark vale just north of Fangorn Forest.

In years past, all Mithril gathered in Moria was sent east, to the Necromancer's fortress of Dol Guldur. After the Necromancer was driven from his fastness in Mirkwood and the strength of the Orcs shattered in the awful year of 2941, the regular Mithril tribute went instead to Mount Gundabad. Now that Sauron has reasserted himself in Mordor, the precious metal should go south again — but Mordor is very, very far away, and Gundabad is much closer (and Durin's Bane even more), so the Goblins hedge their bets and split the tribute. Both Malech One-eye (see page XX) and Thu the Firespeaker (see page XX) have agents and enforcers in Goblin Village, trying to ensure they get the "Dragon's share" of Mithril.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE MARKET SQUARE

This wide square is the heart of Goblin Village. Fires burn here constantly, roasting unidentifiable meat and spitting sparks high into the dark. Goblins cavort in the flickering shadows, laughing and tormenting one another. These are all young Goblins, spawned since the Battle of Five Armies and raised on tales of fearsome Dwarven axes and giant bears.

Like the Mustering-yard, the Market Square is neutral ground between the Orcs of Moria and Orcs of Udûn; however, Malech would never hold an important meeting here, as Goblin Village is full of spies and informants. The market trades in many things as well as secrets — Mithril and other scavenged treasures, for slaves and labourers, for Goblin mercenaries, for food (mushrooms, bats and pale cave-fish), and for favours. The market is run by an ancient and disturbingly friendly Goblin called Granny Goblin. She is canny enough to play the three faction leaders against one another (and she is kin to both the late Great Goblin and Gorgol himself, so they cannot dismiss her easily), and might even trade with outsiders if they have something worth selling.

The market is guarded by "Granny's little boys", big Orc Guard bruisers, but if there is trouble with outsiders, the Goblins scatter into the Under Warren instead of fighting in the open.

### *Granny Goblin*

**Imagine a Hobbit matriarch: conniving, manipulative, capable of both great kindness and cruelty, older and wiser and smarter and meaner than everyone around her. Then take away the capacity for kindness, give her the few sharp teeth left in her crooked gob, and put a malicious twinkle in her eye, and you have Granny Goblin: Lobelia Sackville-Baggins if she swapped her umbrella for a skinning knife.**

**Among her other skills, she is a talented healer and brewer.**

**OCCUPATION:** Entrepreneur

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Cunning, Talkative

## 2. THE HOUSES OF THE EXILES

The Dwarven cities of Nogrod and Belegost were the peers of Khazad-dûm in age and majesty (though, of course, they lacked the Mithril which was found only here). When the cities of the West fell in the cataclysm at the end of the First Age, the lords and nobles of Nogrod and Belegost fled to Moria. They were welcomed and given shelter, but Khazad-dûm already had its own lords and nobles, and the newcomers found themselves without prestige or influence — and in many cases, with dwindling fortunes and no prospect of earning more wealth. Families that had once dwelt in mansions and owned vast mines now found themselves living in new-built hovels in the Lower Deeps, and forced to labour to earn their keep. (Ironically, the same fate would befall the aristocracy of the Longbeards once Moria fell, when the great and wealthy lords of Moria were forced to beg at the doors of the Blue Mountains for shelter.

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

*"Thráin said to Thorin Oakenshield: 'will you come with me back to the anvil? Or will you beg your bread at proud doors?' 'To the anvil,' answered Thorin, 'the hammer at least will keep the arms strong, until they can wield sharper tools again.'"*

These families became known as the Exiles, and were the cause of much strife in Moria. They built new sprawling homes in the Lower Deeps, turning many mine shafts into great burrows. Often resentful and mistrustful of the Longbeards, the Houses of the Exiles were like cities unto themselves, connected by secret passages and hidden ways so they could plot and trade secrets. Now, the Houses of the Exiles have been taken by the Goblins, who mockingly continue to use the names and heraldry of the former occupants. A Goblin of Goblin Village might introduce himself as Grishnar of the House of the Firebeards.

### 3. GRANNY'S HOUSE

Granny Goblin has taken the old Counting-house as her cottage; it is crammed full of dried mushrooms, oozes, unguents and other ingredients for her potions. It is also inhabited by Granny's pets — rats that she has bred to be as large as dogs.

Hidden in a chest under the floorboards is a cache of small ingots of True Mithril, for a total value of 10 Treasure points.

### 4. THE FEAST-HALL

The Goblins gather in this hall — once a Dwarven auditorium, where tales of vanished Nogrod and Belegost were told and retold — for their ghastly feasts. Such feasts are held infrequently, usually when there is some victory to celebrate. Every Goblin in the village attends these celebrations, leaving the rest of the area mostly unguarded.

### 5. THE UNDER WARREN

A network of tunnels runs beneath the market. Some were dug by Dwarves; others by the Goblins. Tunnels from here run all the way down to the mines — and north to Goblin Town near the High Pass. The tunnels are unnavigable by outsiders — a Goblin guide is needed to traverse this labyrinth.

## Schemes and Troubles

### FOR TRADE IN GOBLIN VILLAGE

The market at the Goblin-Village always has something interesting for sale. Roll a Feat die, or choose an entry on the table below, to determine what…

#### GOBLIN VILLAGE GOODS FOR TRADE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | GOOD FOR TRADE |
|---|---|
| | A prisoner from the surface |
| 1 | A crudely hand-drawn map of the way to a Hidden Landmark or exit from Moria |
| 2 | An ancient book of Dwarven lore |
| 3 | Goblin-clothing, enough to make a convincing disguise |
| 4–7 | A Useful Item — roll a Success die for the related skill<br>1: A set of Goblin traps for HUNTING<br>2: Goblin waymeat for TRAVEL<br>3: Granny's healing cordial for HEALING<br>4: Old Dwarven tools for CRAFT<br>5: A heavy Goblin cloak for STEALTH<br>6: A set of marked cards for RIDDLE |
| 8 | Mysterious and potent mushrooms |
| 9 | Secrets about one of the Orc-lords |
| 10 | A chunk of looted Mithril |
| | A key to a locked door or some item that the Player-heroes are seeking |

### SMASHING AND GRABBING

If any of the Player-heroes are captured in Moria, or if they lose some treasured item, then there is a good chance of the inhabitants of Goblin Village finding them.

### THE INVISIBLE GOBLINS

Many years ago, three Goblins exploring the ruins of West Moria found three gold rings. These were lesser magic rings, but still potent, capable of making their wearers invisible. Instead of giving these treasures to their chieftain, the Goblins became thieves and assassins, sneaking invisibly through Moria — taking what they wished, killing who they wished.

When each Goblin became too old to make use of the ring, they passed it onto another Goblin, and they onto another and another down the line. The Invisible Goblins now dwell in Goblin Village, unseen and unknown guardians of the lair. Only Granny Goblin knows the current keepers of the rings.

The rings each possess a Blessing of **STEALTH**.

### *Invisible Goblins*

Ordinary Goblins who got particularly lucky...

**INVISIBLE GOBLINS**
Malicious, Stealthy

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL: 2

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1 | 2 | — | 1 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Jagged Knife 3* (2/14, Pierce)
* When invisible, their Combat Proficiency is 5 against Player-heroes who cannot see them.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Invisible.* This creature is invisible, and AWARENESS, SCAN, and attack rolls against it *lose (2d)*, while the creature's attack rolls are *Favoured* and *gain (1d)* against Player-heroes who cannot see it. A Player-hero who obtains a Magical success on an AWARENESS or SCAN roll can see the creature normally and ignores all penalties for the rest of the fight.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

# The Ledge of Woe

– OBSCURE –

*A wide and echoing passage led back from the door towards the mountain-side. It was dimly lit with torches flaring in brackets on the walls, but its distant end was lost in gloom. Many doors and openings could be seen on this side and that; but it was empty save for two or three more bodies sprawling on the floor.*

### RUMOUR

*"The abyss spanned by Durin's Bridge is bottomless, the fall is endless. You can hear the screams of those who fell into the pit, echoing up eternally."*

### OLD LORE

*"The Dwarven kings had a prison near the Second Hall, where enemies of the city were kept until they repented."*

## BACKGROUND

Far, far below Durin's Bridge, one narrow tunnel opens up onto a small ledge overlooking the bottomless chasm. The Orcs use this ledge as a prison; they have barred the tunnel with a crude iron gate, and thrust prisoners through it onto the ledge. They then bet how long the prisoners will endure before hunger and cold and oppressive darkness eat away at their minds, and they try to fly…

The cries of prisoners on the Ledge of Woe echo up the chasm, and can distantly be heard in the Second Hall (see page XX) far above.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. ORC GUARD-POST

A double-strength guard post, with twice as many Orc Soldiers as there are Player-heroes, plus a rabble of lesser foes. The guards here can call for reinforcements from the Fortress of Malech (see page XX) if attacked.

### 2. GRIMNAR'S CHAMBER

This is the personal chamber of the gaoler of the Ledge of Woe. It's a small square room, whose original purpose is lost. It is so small that it is a marvel that Grimnar finds it comfortable (he probably finds it reassuring that no one can lie in here in ambush).

### *Grimnar the Gaoler*

**Grimnar is the gaoler of the Ledge of Woe. He is an old Great Orc Bodyguard; like Malech, he fought at the Battle of Five Armies, and still bears a *Hatred* against Dwarves, Elves, and Bardings. He was replaced by Yagul the Snatcher in Malech's inner circle, and resents Yagul's influence over his former comrade.**

**Grimnar kept one treasure from the battlefield – a Dwarven dagger, wickedly sharp and beautiful. It gleams even in the darkness, as if reflecting unseen daylight. He uses it to remind prisoners of the beauty of the surface world that they will never see again…**

**OCCUPATION:** Gaoler

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Cruel, Watchful

### 3. BEARDSCORCHER'S CHAMBER

Beardscorcher is Grimnar's assistant — a secret adherent of the Orcs of Udûn cult. Braziers burn sullenly in this chamber, and the air is thick with foul smoke. As his nickname suggests, Beardscorcher uses fire to force the truth out of prisoners given to him for questioning — and sometimes, if he thinks he hears a voice in the flames, he 'frees' the prisoners by leading them to the Udûn-temple (see page XX).

### 4. THE LEDGE OF WOE

The 'prison without bars' on the edge of the chasm. The Dwarves only ever kept a single prisoner here, and that prisoner had ample space to walk about — as long as they did not walk too far forwards. The Orcs, however, cram far more prisoners onto the narrow ledge, forcing the unlucky ones to cling to the rock face where the ledge is too narrow to stand safely.

At any time, there are at least half-a-dozen prisoners here; mostly unaligned Orcs who strayed into Malech's domain, or prisoners snatched from the Dimrill Stair, from Orc-raids into the Anduin Vales, or marched through the tunnels from the northern strongholds.

### 5. PASSAGE TO THE FORTRESS OF MALECH

This well-travelled route through the corridors of Moria is easy to follow, for Orcs tramp this way regularly. Thick soot from torches stains the ceiling; the walls are scarred with Orc-graffiti. While easy to follow, it is also dangerous — travellers on this passage are almost certain to encounter Malech's Orcs.

### 6. PASSAGE TO THE WAILING STAIRS

Similarly, this route to the Wailing Stairs is heavily trafficked — and well guarded. Travellers going this way are similarly likely to run into trouble (and, if captured, get marched back to the Ledge of Woe as captives). Beardscorcher sometimes 'arranges' for prisoners to go missing en route to the mines, sending them instead to the Temple of Udûn.

### 7. THE WAILING STAIRS

The Wailing Stairs is a long, steep road that leads down to the active Mines of Moria, currently held by the followers of Malech One-eye. The Stairs are the safest route to the mines currently extant, so Malech uses the stair to send Slave-labourers down to dig; their weeping and wailing as they are marched to their doom gives the stairs its name.

The Wailing Stairs descend via many twists and turns to the Den of Forgotten Stars far far below (see page XX). It takes more than a day to descend the Stairs, and longer still to climb back up them when laden with ore, and there are many places for ambush along the way. The Orcs, therefore, travel the Stairs in guarded processions, moving slaves in groups of a dozen or more.

The other routes to the mines are all far more perilous, forcing travellers to risk cave-in, flood — or flames…

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### PRISONERS OF THE LEDGE OF WOE

If the Company comes upon this location by chance, and the Loremaster is in the mood for a random complication, roll a Feat die to determine who is on the Ledge.

#### PRISONERS OF THE LEDGE TABLE

| FEAT DIE ROLL | PRISONER |
|---|---|
|  | Imri the Traitor (see page XX), who attempts to lure the Company into Yagul's clutches |
| 1–2 | The corpse of a prisoner who perished scratching at the gates. |
| 3–4 | A swarm of hungry rats; no real threat to most adventurers, although failing with an  on a VALOUR test means the hero panics and might slip over the edge. |
| 5–6 | A Goblin from Goblin Village; if freed, the Goblin will treacherously raise the alarm. However, if challenged to a riddle-game for their freedom, the Goblin is bound by the rules to answer fairly. |
| 7–8 | The ledge contains a prisoner from another Orc-tribe (1: Orcs of Udûn; 2–5: Goblin Village; 6: Mordor-orcs). The prisoner is eager for revenge against Malech, and offers a temporary alliance with the Company. |
| 9–10 | A prisoner (1–3: a Man; 4–5: a Dwarf; 6: an Elf) captured in Dimrill Dale. |
| ᚠ | Someone the Company has met before in other (and doubtless better!) circumstances. It might be a fellow adventurer, some Beorning or Woodman they have encountered before, a Hobbit burglar from the Shire, a prospective Patron like one of the characters in *Chapter 2* — or even a Wizard like Gandalf or Radagast! |

#### THE EAGLE PADROVAL

If you are using the *Fate of Eagles* plot (see page XX), then there may be one really strange prisoner on the Ledge of Woe — the young eagle Padroval. The Orcs have bound him in chains of iron so he cannot fly, and muzzled him so he cannot peck.

If freed from his bonds, a successful HEALING test is required to restore his flight. Padroval is a young eagle; he can carry a single rider, or maybe two Hobbits at a time.

### ESCAPING THE LEDGE OF WOE

If the Player-heroes do end up on the Ledge of Woe, there are three possible ways out.

- **A DEAL WITH GRIMNAR:** Grimnar has heard rumours from his old friend Gorlakh the Doorwarden (see page XX) about the arrival of the Mordor-orcs, and has given some thought to switching sides and joining them. First, though, he would need to actually find them — he knows they are up somewhere on the Redhorn Pass, but he is not going to go wandering on the surface without a sure idea where he is going. There are dangerous things up there, and he should know. If Grimnar does cut a deal with any Player-heroes, he keeps one of the Company prisoner on the Ledge of Woe until the rest return.
- **OUT OF THE FRYING PAN:** Beardscorcher sometimes smuggles prisoners to the Temple of Udûn — and he is especially likely to send troublesome or obviously wounded prisoners there. If a prisoner looks like they would be no good in the mine, then it is the fire for them!
- **THE LONG CLIMB:** Climbing up the chasm would be a feat worthy of legend. It would require a Daunting Skill Endeavour, certainly involving rolls of ATHLETICS, knowing that a single failure with an  means slipping and falling into the darkness from which no mortal returns.

# The Udûn-temple

– hidden –

*"Ghâsh!" muttered Gandalf. "I wonder if that is what they meant: that the lower levels are on fire."*

### RUMOUR

None. No rumour of the Udûn-temple has ever reached the outside world. If the Player-heroes question Orcs or other denizens of Moria, they learn only one word — *Ghâsh.*

### OLD LORE

None. No record exists of this structure.

## Background

Moria does not belong to the Orcs.

None of the warring chieftains — not Malech or Naglur, not Gorgol, not even Azog — was truly Lord of Moria.

Indeed, the Orcs are latecomers here.

The true Lord of Moria arose in fire a thousand years ago, and drove the Dwarves from their ancestral halls. For many centuries, Moria was empty, save for the Balrog. Silent, save for its dreadful footsteps echoing in the deep.

Slowly, slowly, the Goblins crept in. They snuck in through hidden tunnels and caves, gingerly probing the house of their old foes. They found gold here, and steel, and Mithril; they found gems and jewels lying about, glittering in the light of fading lamps. They laughed, and cackled, and rejoiced at the downfall of the Dwarves and the bounty of treasure that lay before them.

Then flames leaped in the shadow.

The temple — and fortress — of the Orcs of Udûn was not built by the Dwarves. The Orcs built it themselves, in a vast cavern in the Lower Deeps. The top of the temple ziggurat is open and smoke and foul fumes issue from it, rolling down the sides to pool on the cavern floor. Narrow elevated walkways zig-zag from the temple doors across the cavern, and the Orcs of Udûn use these to stay above the foul reek. (The ornate leather masks worn by the worshippers of the Balrog have a practical purpose, shielding them from the fumes.)

Within the temple are chambers for Thu and his followers, holding cells for sacrifices and offerings, and a treasury containing all the relics that the Orcs have looted. The central chamber of the dome, beneath the opening, is a great pyre where offerings are consigned to the flames of Udûn that blaze there eternally. The Orcs of Udûn dance around the fire, chanting and praying, and sometimes thrust a portion of their bodies into the fire in mimicry of Thu — usually, a hand or arm — in the hopes of attracting a blessing. They insist that their burnt limbs are infused with the Balrog's might.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. THE REEKING CAVE

The floor of this cavern is shrouded in swirling sulphurous fumes; the ground is caked with ash. Should a traveller climb down and move along the floor of the cave, then their **STEALTH** tests are *Favoured*, but they suffer a moderate Endurance loss from suffocation as they inhale the toxic smoke. Strange yellow Cave-spiders as big as a Goblin's head live in this cavern, apparently thriving in the fumes, and they spin webs as thick as a Dwarf's beard to catch their prey.

### 2. WALKWAYS

Narrow and precarious rope bridges connect the various cave entrances and watchposts.

### 3. WATCHPOSTS

Orc sentries are stationed at each of these towers or rocky pillars. If the Temple is ever threatened by enemies, they use axes to cut the rope bridges.

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

### 4. TEMPLE ENTRANCES

The three arched entrances to the temple each display the same crude drawing of Durin's Bane — a roughly humanoid figure, Man-shaped but greater, with a flaming mane. The thing's body is drawn in black pitch; the fiery hair is smeared blood. While the depiction is ugly and Orcish, it has an undeniable power; those who would pass through one of the arches gain 2 points of Shadow (Dread) and increase the Eye Awareness by 2.

### 5. ORC-WARRENS

While Thu the Firespeaker commands far fewer Orcs than Malech, his followers are much more devoted. They nest here in these chambers, the air thick with smoke and Orc-stench, nursing their ceremonial burns and muttering the word *ghâsh* over and over in an endless litany.

### 6. THE CHAMBER OF FIRE

The Temple was built around an ancient well. The shaft goes down and down in the depths, down to a cavern near the lair of Durin's Bane. At times, the Balrog passes through that cavern, sending flames and smoke up the shaft to pour into the chamber of fire. Thu reads portents in the sparks and smoke, and sacrifices are hurled down to propitiate the Balrog.

The Balrog can ascend the shaft on wings of fire, if it needs to travel from the depths to the upper levels in haste. Conceivably, a Player-hero could descend the shaft to reach *The Lair of Durin's Bane* (see page XX).

The Udûn-cult gather here for their blasphemous ceremonies.

### 7. PRISON

Victims captured by the Udûn-cult (or brought by Beard-scorcher, see page XX) are imprisoned in these cells until it is time for them to be offered to the flames. Instead of iron bars or chains, the Orcs use foul vapours to keep prisoners trapped here. See *Prisoners of Udûn*, see page XX.

### 8. APOTHECARY OF AZOR

While the cult does keep weapons and relics here, this chamber is mostly crammed with jars and pots containing various poisons brewed up by Thu. It is here that Thu creates his Azor-assassins, here that he distils fear into a smoking bowl, here that he prepares sacrifices for the well of fire.

Here, too, is the treasury of the cult. Gold and other treasures are thrown down the pit as offerings; their treasure is in Dwarven steel and weapons of war.

### 9. THU'S CHAMBER

The head of the Udûn-cult dwells in this chamber. His room lacks all luxuries, all trophies; he exists solely to serve the Balrog, and sees himself as nothing but an instrument of its will. The only item of furniture is a burning brazier, so Thu can stare into the dancing flames.

## *Thu the Firespeaker*

**Thu believes that Durin's Bane chose him as its Prophet and Champion. Certainly, the Balrog has touched Thu; the Orc is horribly burned, his hide scorched so he looks like something scaly, or a log that was left in the embers of a camp-fire. His eyes burn like fiery sparks in the darkness of the tunnels. Thu claims the Balrog speaks to him through the flames, and teaches him the ways and worship of Morgoth, True King of Middle-earth. Whether Thu is mad, or if he has a genuine connection to the Balrog is a mystery, but the burnt Orc is certainly possessed of a brightly burning spirit. His voice is a croaky whisper, like ash is cracking and flaking inside his throat, but it has a strangely compelling charisma. His insights are keen for an Orc, and he knows secrets of Sorcery that other Orcs have long forgotten.**

**Secrecy is his first priority. Thu — or his master — fears discovery, so anything that draws attention to Moria must be snuffed out. Intruders must be slain before they can report back to the outside world. Thu is old enough to remember the foolishness of Azog at the gates, when he slew the old Dwarf-King and tossed Thrór's head back out. Had Thu been there that day, then Thrór would have vanished into the darkness of Moria, and no word of his fate would ever have come back to the Blue Mountains or Iron Hills. The defeat at the Battle of Five Armies was an unexpected boon for Thu, as it guaranteed the Orcs would not dare set foot outside Moria for years afterwards. Now, Thu's chief worry is the rumbling rumour of Sauron's return to Mordor — and the attendant demand for tribute of Mithril.**

**Thu's attitude towards intruders in Moria, therefore, depends on their intentions. If the stranger is just passing through Moria, then it is in Thu's interest to speed them along, so they leave quickly and never return. He orders his followers to avoid contact with outsiders, to let them think that Moria is empty and deserted.**

**Explorers, however, must perish in silence and darkness, leaving no clue as to their fate. Even the other Orcs cannot be permitted to know the true nature of Durin's Bane...**

**THU THE FIRESPEAKER**
Faithful, Secretive

ATTRIBUTE LEVEL 7

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28 | 2 | 7 | +1 | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Torch-staff 3 (4/14, Fiery Blow*)
* The attack burns the target, inflicting a severe Endurance loss from fire damage.

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Dreadful Spells.* Spend 1 Hate to make one Player-hero gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery). Targets who fail their Shadow test or who are Miserable burst into flame, suffering a grievous Endurance loss from fire damage.

*Heartless.* Thu the Firespeaker is not affected by the Intimidate Foe combat task, unless a Magical success is obtained.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to Thu the Firespeaker that would cause him to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if Thu the Firespeaker is still alive, his Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Strike Fear.* Spend 1 Hate to make all Player-heroes in sight gain 2 Shadow points (Dread). Those who fail their Shadow test are daunted and cannot spend Hope for the rest of the fight.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all allies in the fight.

# Schemes and Troubles

## Rites of Udûn

Worship of the Balrog extends beyond the Orc-cultists who dwell at the temple. Many of the unaligned Orcs — and even a considerable number of Malech's followers — gather here for rites. Orcs, by nature, serve the Shadow and so are drawn to power and cruelty in any form. Roll or choose the current state of the Udûn-temple when the Company visits it.

### Ûdun-temple's Blasphemies

| FEAT DIE ROLL | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|
|  | **Greater Ceremony.** A great many Orcs have gathered in the Temple — and they have prepared sacrifices that have drawn the Balrog's attention. A terrible *presence* is here. This has the following effects:<br>♦ Add 3 to the Hate score of all Orcs;<br>♦ Upon arrival, all Player-heroes gain 3 points of Shadow (Dread);<br>♦ Any Eye Awareness gains made at this Landmark are tripled. |
| 1–2 | **Lesser Ceremony.** Many Orcs have gathered here to observe the rites and offer sacrifices, but they have not yet roused Durin's Bane. Still, any Eye Awareness gains made at this Landmark are doubled. |
| 3–4 | **Ceremonial Processions.** The worship of the flame of Udûn is not confined to the temple. The Orcs go abroad through the lower levels in ceremonial processions, beating drums and sounding war-horns to call the Balrog. This clamour distracts the Orcs, making it easier for the Player-heroes to sneak about or avoid the Temple precincts. |
| 5–6 | **Orcs in the Tunnels.** Orcs are abroad, either travelling to the Temple or departing after a rite. The Company could follow the Orcs to the Temple or some other Landmark like Goblin Village (see page XX) or the Fortress of Malech (see page XX). |
| 7–10 | **Silence in the Temple.** The Temple is quiet; other than the Udûn-cultists, there are no additional Orcs here. |
| ᚠ | **Stupefied by Fumes.** Pungent smoke from the Well of Fire makes the Orcs sleepy or confused. This counts as a Lesser Ceremony, but the Orcs are made Weary. |

### PRISONERS OF UDÛN

New prisoners are forced to inhale the steam rising from a bowl containing boiling water and certain herbs known only to Thu. These fumes fill them with overwhelming terror, giving them nightmarish visions of being trapped in the dungeons of Angband many Ages ago. Anyone trying to leave the prison must make an *Ill-favoured* **VALOUR** roll. If the roll fails, the prisoner gains 3 Shadow points and is frozen by fear, *losing (1d)* on further attempts. They may keep trying if they wish…

A successful **ENHEARTEN** roll from someone unaffected by the fumes removes the penalty.

### AZOR AND THE POISONS OF THU

Among the Orcs of the Misty Mountains, Azor is a name of terror, a name to frighten Orc-whelps, as ghastly as the name of Beorn or the cry *'Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!'* Azor, the tales say, is a fiery-eyed assassin who protects the Udûn-cult; anyone who crosses Thu is doomed to be slain by the dreaded Azor. Some accounts insist that Azor is a Skin-changer, able to change his appearance at will. Sometimes, Azor appears as a mighty Troll, but next time he is an easily overlooked Goblin. Anyone might be Azor — so sleep lightly!

In truth, Azor is a title, not a name. The role of Azor is given by Thu to an Orc chosen for a special task. Thu knows how to brew a potion that grants the imbiber greatly enhanced strength and speed — but burns them up from the inside, until at last the fire consumes them. To be chosen as Azor, then, is to die in glory and become a living sacrifice to Durin's Bane.

A creature under the effects of the Azor-rite gains the following bonuses:

- Attribute Level is increased by 2;
- Might is increased by 1;
- Endurance is increased by 20;
- Hate is increased by 2;
- They gain the Fell Abilities *Hideous Toughness*, *Horrible Strength* and *Snake-like Speed*;
- Whenever the creature rolls a ᚠ on any test, they automatically suffer 1 Wound;
- When the creature suffers a Wound, anyone engaged with it suffers a severe Endurance loss from the flames that burst from the creature;
- When the creature is slain, it bursts into fire and is consumed.

### ANCIENT RUINS

As the Dwarves delved deep, some tales claim they found the remnants of ancient structures, chambers and hallways older than the oldest works of Durin. These chambers were a mystery to the Dwarves, though the Wise among them guessed that these halls were made by the first Elves as they made their way west to Valinor, in the days before Durin woke or the sun and moon danced in the sky. Perhaps the Elves did encamp here, in the shadow of the newborn mountains, before carrying on west — or these ruins could be older still. Middle-earth lay in darkness and silence for untold ages before the Elves awoke, and who knows what spirits or creatures moved across the face of the unnamed land?

Another, darker, possibility — the great Enemy, Morgoth, prepared many fortresses in the North, in anticipation of his war with the Elves and the Lords of Valinor. Conceivably, he might have built a secret lair beneath the Misty Mountains, a last redoubt where he could hide if Angband fell. Durin's Bane might have fled to this refuge to slumber away the Ages, surrounded by forgotten weapons and monsters from the pits of Morgoth.

The true nature of the Ancient Ruins, if they exist, is left up to the Loremaster — these chambers are buried so deep that it is unlikely that any Player-heroes will ever walk here, and their secrets may never be discovered.

# The Mines

*And since the Dwarves fled, no one dares to seek the shafts and treasuries down in the deep places: they are drowned in water — or in a shadow of fear.*

The fabled mines are the deepest delving of the Dwarves, as they chased the Mithril-veins. There are many natural perils this far underground, such as cave-ins, flooding or foul air. When the Dwarves dug here, they forged mighty pumps to drain the flood-waters, and shafts to bring in breathable air. A thousand years of neglect, however, has choked the pumps and shafts, and now the mines are extremely dangerous. The tunnels are exceedingly cramped and confusing; as the Mithril veins petered out, the Dwarves dug in every direction in search of more ore under Caradhras. Some of the tunnels are barely big enough for a single Dwarf to squeeze through.

The Orcs dare not risk traversing the lowest portions of the mines, especially not the veins under Caradhras where Durin's Bane dwells. However, they have reopened the older iron mines for their own purposes. The growing Orc-horde needs weapons and armour, and from Moria to Gundabad the mountains ring with the sound of hammer on anvil…

## The Den of Forgotten Stars

– hidden –

*The Dwarves delved deep at that time, seeking beneath Barazinbar for Mithril, the metal beyond price that was becoming yearly ever harder to win.*

### RUMOUR

*"The Dwarves dug for thousands of years, seeking Mithril. There's still piles of it, down under the mountain. A fortune awaits you there, if you're brave enough to seek it!"*

### OLD LORE

*"The Dwarven Mithril mines were vast indeed, for Mithril was found only in rare veins, and the miners had to chase these glittering veins deep under the mountains. Mithril was first found in a great cave at the roots of the mountains, and this place is known as the Den of Forgotten Stars."*

### Background

This tremendous open chamber was the heart of the Mithril mine. The chamber was excavated in the course of mining for Mithril, and then later filled with machinery to sift and wash the ore before it was carried back up the Wailing Stairs to the refineries and smelters in the city above. All that machinery was destroyed by the wrath of Durin's Bane, and now the chamber is used as a holding pen for the slaves who toil in the mines. The Orcs dare not dig for Mithril, but there are still rich deposits of iron and gold to be found.

Malech's forces hold the foot of the Wailing Stairs, and so control the supplies of food and fresh water. This is a miserable place, where exhausted Dwarves and Men alike lie slumped in the dirt until the whips of the Orcs force them back to work — and yet, perversely, it is beautiful, too, for little fragments of Mithril in the walls reflect the light of torches like a brilliant sky of stars.

Escaping from the Den is quite easy — but to where? There are few ways back up to the city above save the Wailing Stair, and Goblins lurk in all the tunnels.

### Locations

#### 1. THE BLACK BARBICAN

This fortified guardhouse holds the foot of the Wailing Stairs. Unusually for Moria, it is entirely Orc-work, and looks like it — all jagged stone and spikes of iron. Twin heavy doors of bound birch-wood block the Stairs, while the Orc Guards

watch from the archway above, ready to hurl spears at any would-be escapees. The Orcs even keep a kennel of Wargs down here to hunt down escaped slaves.

Fodder for the slaves is stored here, but only a small amount; the Orcs replenish these supplies regularly. Even if the slaves were to rise up and escape the mines, they would quickly run out of food and be easy prey for Malech's forces.

The treasury here contains some Mithril items hidden away by Shagram.

## *Shagram, the "Merry Fellow"*

**The Master of the Black Barbican is the happiest Orc in all of Moria, and sings merrily as he whips the slaves and Goblin-wretches to work in the mines every day. Shagram is monstrously sadistic, but he has always got a big grin on his toothy face, and positively bubbles with enthusiasm. He even pretends to be friendly and approachable to new slaves, asking them about their homelands and how they came to be in such a dire predicament – and then he takes out his whips and manacles.**

**Shagram is loyal to Malech, but he is one of the few Orcs in Moria who clearly sees that Malech is no more the chieftain he once was. Shagram's current plan is to find a way to eliminate Malech's bodyguard Uftak – once the brute has gone, Shagram believes he can convince the other Orc-captains in the city to support him as Malech's successor. If he is in position before Gorgol arrives, he can present his new rank as a done deal and give obeisance to the Son of Bolg.**

**Shagram spends long hours in the Black Barbican, plotting out various scenarios and scheming ways to eliminate Uftak. He sometimes confides in slaves, using them as sounding boards as he thinks through his plans. After all, no slave is ever going to escape the mines, so there is no harm in letting a few of his secrets slip...**

**SHAGRAM**
Merry, Sadistic

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 5

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | 2 | 5 | – | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Scimitar 3 (3/16), Whip 3 (2/14, Seize)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Fearless.* Shagram's Might is considered 1 higher for the purpose of resisting the Intimidate Foe combat task.

*Great Leap.* Spend 1 Hate to attack any Player-hero in any combat stance, including Rearward.

*Yell of Triumph.* Spend 1 Hate to restore 1 Hate to all other Orcs in the fight.

### 2. THE DEN OF FORGOTTEN STARS

This huge chamber is strewn with rubble and twisted metal, the remains of the old Dwarven refinery. There are lots of places to hide amid the debris, but Orcs with Wargs sniff out any shirkers and whip them back to work.

### 3. ORC-QUARTERS

Most of the prisoners working in the mines are Orcs from enemy clans, captured by Malech's forces in battle. The Orcs enjoy a higher status than the other prisoners, and if an Orc wins the favour of the gaolers — through sycophancy or collusion — they may be released from the prison and allowed to join Malech's faction. However such promotions are rare, and most Orc-prisoners work until they perish — but they still torment the other prisoners. The baleful influence of the Enemy still fills their hearts.

### 4. DWARF-QUARTERS

A handful of Slave-Dwarves work in the mine. They suffer the delusions that afflict many Dwarves who visit Moria, and believe themselves to be in the service of King Durin, delving for a fortune in Mithril. They keep to themselves in this chamber.

### 5. SLAVE-QUARTERS

If the Orcs have snatched any travellers from the Dimrill Pass or on one of Yagul's raids (see page XX), or captured any intruders in Moria, then they end up here (assuming they are not given to the flames in the Temple of Udûn. Roll on the table on see page XX to determine the identity of any prisoners here; there are unlikely to be more than two or three at any time, if there are any at all.

### 6. INFIRMARY

Do not expect mercy here. Orcs have various remedies to quickly revive a prisoner who succumbs to exhaustion, but those who cannot get back to work quickly are butchered and served in the stewpot.

### 7. TO THE IRON-MINES

This path leads to the older portion of the Mines, where there is still some ore to be found. These mines are a labyrinth beyond imagining, and no-one knows their full extent.

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

### THE GOBLIN WAY

The Goblins tried to besiege Moria many times. Over the long Ages, they wormed their way through the mountains, always digging, always seeking, looking for a way into the city above. On a few occasions, they broke through and raided the Dwarrowdelf, only to be turned back by doughty Dwarven warriors.

Now, the maze of tunnels – as complex and delicate as veins beneath the skin – extends through the mountains. Not even the Goblins know all the twists and turns of their creation, for it was dug over thousands of years by jealous, paranoid or crazed Goblins, many of whom left traps and deliberate blind corridors to hinder their rivals. Still, the tunnels of the Goblin Way connect to the upper Mines of Moria, and run from there north to Goblin Town and Gundabad.

### 8. TO THE GREATER VEIN AND THE GOBLIN-WAY

The vein of Mithril beneath Caradhras splits in two. The Dwarves pursued both veins, digging many exploratory tunnels and shafts to follow the lodes of ore, until they settled on chasing the more promising Greater Vein. These tunnels connect with the underground road called the Goblin Way. It is certainly possible to escape the mines by taking this path and then finding a tunnel that leads up to the Goblin Village, or continues on north towards far-off Gundabad — but this path goes under Caradhras, and is perilous beyond compare.

## *Old Scratch*

A particular ancient and gnarled Goblin, so old no-one remembers his real name. Scratch haunts the Goblin Way and the mines, scavenging chips of Mithril and gathering them until he has enough to trade up at the Goblin Village. He survives on cave-fish and the occasional strangled miner.

Scratch's lair, deep in the mines, is a wonder – over the years, he has salvaged fine furniture and art from the ruins above, and dragged such pieces down here to adorn his cave. This is a Goblin who eats his raw fish from silver plates, and disembowels those strangled miners with gold-plated knives.

Old Scratch can be employed as a guide, if bribed with food and Treasure. He is not trustworthy by any means, but a Goblin does not live as long as he has without knowing when to fight and when to help the nasty adventurers armed with sharp swords.

He is not aligned with any of the Orc-factions, but he has seen Durin's Bane, and fears it. If pressed, he will run to the Udûn-orcs for shelter.

**OCCUPATION:** Mithril Scavenger

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES:** Keen-eyed, Traitorous

### 9. TO THE LESSER VEIN AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF STONE

This mine-tunnel near the Lesser Vein slopes steeply down, chasing a glimmering Mithril-vein whose silver traceries are still visible in the wall. It ends abruptly at the top of a deeper shaft. The shattered remains of what might once have been a stone seal or carving lie scattered on the ground, covered with a layer of greasy soot.

This was where the Dwarves delved too deep. This was where the Balrog woke.

This is a corrupted place: Player-heroes who enter here gain 3 points of Shadow (Sorcery). Those who fall also feel a strange compulsion to climb down the shaft into the caverns below, drawing them towards the fires like moths to a flame…

The shaft leads down to the Foundations of Stone (see page XX).

## Schemes and Troubles

### Relief from Slavery

Heroic Companies may doubtless wish to rescue these unfortunates from the mines. There are three obstacles that must be overcome.

- **Rallying the Slaves:** The Slaves are in deep despair and have lost all hope of rescue. They are suspicious of any talk of escape, several of them were brought here by the treachery of Imri (see page XX) and so they dare not trust strangers. A successful test of **Enhearten** or showing some other proof of the Player-heroes' worthiness is needed to rally the prisoners.
- **Finding a Way Out:** The only known route out is up the Wailing Stairs — and if the Player-heroes intend to take that path, they must break through the Black Barbican. Their options are to lay siege to the fortification, or wait for a moment when the gates are open and try rushing the guards. Alternatively, the Company could search for another way out through the mines — but many have sought and failed to find such a route.
- **Defeating the Guards:** The Orc Guards under Shagram are numerous and cruel, and they have been preparing for a slave uprising for years, so they are ready for a fight. Of course, they expect to be facing desperate, starving slaves and not armed adventurers, so a sudden attack that slays Shagram and his cronies could break the will of the Orcs.

### Remaking the Seal

Conceivably, if the Balrog was indeed 'released from prison' by the excavations of the Dwarves, then it could be imprisoned once again if the Seal were restored. The fragments of the Seal are marked with Elvish letters of a truly ancient mode, the Tengwar of Rúmil, and few even among the Wise can read these signs. The Seal was made of stone, but the letters were inlaid with an enchanted metal unknown to the Dwarves (perhaps Ithildin might serve as an adequate replacement).

Repairing the Seal would require a Daunting Skill Endeavour, using **Craft**, **Lore**, or **Song**. At least 1 Magical success with each of these Skills is required to complete the Endeavour. There is no time limit, but each Skill roll causes the Player-hero attempting it to gain 3 Shadow points (Sorcery).

If the Seal is repaired, then someone would have to lure Durin's Bane back down into the Foundations of Stone, and would doubtless be trapped down there in the dark forever.

# The Balrog's Throne

– hidden –

*His enemy halted again, facing him, and the shadow about it reached out like two vast wings. It raised the whip, and the thongs whined and cracked. Fire came from its nostrils.*

### Rumour

*"Ghâsh say the Orcs — fire! They admit nothing more."*

### Old Lore

*"The lore of the Elder Days is preserved in few places in Middle-earth. Perhaps Loremaster Elrond of Rivendell could speak of the destruction of Thangorodrim, when the Elves deemed Evil was ended forever. Elven songs still sing of Balrogs and other fell creatures of the Enemy — but all this has passed out of the mind and memory. No lore speaks of this stronghold of darkness."*

## Background

These are the chambers that the Balrog has claimed as its own, deep in the mines. These are not natural caverns — they resemble an ancient temple or fortress of Morgoth, but if these ruins existed before the Balrog came, or if it forced the last Dwarves of Moria to carve this monument to its vanished master, none can say.

The darkness here is overwhelming. Here all lights fail — only magical light can pierce the shadow. Torches and candles continue to burn, and their flames can be seen, but they

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

shed no illumination. Those trespassing here must navigate by touch — and the rock walls are hot enough to sear flesh.

No-one has ever entered these chambers and returned, save Thu the Firespeaker.

## LOCATIONS

### 1. PATHS OF APPROACH

All these tunnels slope steeply downwards. The air grows thick with fumes, the darkness deepens as Player-heroes draw closer to the Balrog's lair. Turning around and fleeing is not so easy, as the incline of the slope seems to suddenly increase the moment intruders think of leaving.

Going back up one of these paths requires a successful **ATHLETICS** roll; failure increases the Player-hero's Fatigue by 1 and prevents them from moving. The Player-hero can try again.

### 2. BURNING CAVERNS

Pools of molten lava bubble in these caverns. A sullen crust of semi-solid rock, like a scab over an infected wound, covers most of the lava flow. There are spikes of black basalt that a nimble Player-hero could jump between, like stepping stones. The Balrog, being a spirit of fire, can pass over the lava without fear. Others must make an **ATHLETICS** roll to cross these caverns; those who fail suffer a grievous Endurance loss from fire.

The light-swallowing effect of the temple beyond becomes noticeable here; these rooms are unnaturally dark despite the sullen ember-glow of the molten rock.

### 3. THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER

The well-shaft from the Udûn-temple (see page XX) opens into this cavern, which was once an underground lake. The walls bear traces of mineral deposits left when the heat of the Balrog's presence turned the water to steam. The underground stream that once flowed here has been blocked up, although the trickling of water can still be heard nearby.

The floor of the chamber is covered in ash, burnt bones and the scorched remnants of offerings hurled down the pit by the Orcs of Udûn. The Balrog has no interest in such sacrifices; searching through the debris turns up a Lesser Hoard worth of grave goods.

### 4. CHASM

A deep pit in the mountain. The river once plunged down into this chasm, down to the Foundations of Stone far below. The Balrog uses this path to travel to the unknown places deep below — and things from below might creep up this chasm too, now that the way is open.

### 5. TEMPLE TO DARKNESS

The Balrog's lair. The darkness here is complete, as deep as it was in the timeless time before Elbereth kindled the first stars. No light can penetrate these halls; all lamps are quenched, all candles snuffed. Even magical light cannot endure here; perhaps the Phial of Galadriel could drive back the Shadow, but other powers falter here.

Player-heroes stumbling through the darkness might brush against nightmare carvings of monsters and tormented souls, of dead trees and mighty citadels — or they might plummet into an unseen pit, never to be seen again.

While nothing can be *seen* here, something can be heard — the echo of discordant music, distant yet terrible. It gnaws at all hope, all sanity. Those who enter the temple gain 4 points of Shadow (Dread); those who fail are overcome with terror and must flee.

### 6. MITHRIL-VEINS

And here, beyond the reach of Man or Dwarf, are veins of Mithril of surpassing fruitfulness. Untapped, untouched, immeasurable, the bounty of the Mountain's heart waits for one to claim it.

### 7. THE BALROG'S THRONE

Durin's Bane sits on a throne of reddish-black stone, carved from the basalt roots of Caradhras. The heat of the Balrog's presence has turned the room to flame; pools of lava bubble in the floor, belching poisonous fumes into the air. When not stalking through the corridors of Moria, Durin's Bane sits here, waiting and listening for its Master's voice, a call from Morgoth that will not be heard until the World's ending, until the Great Enemy returns at the end of days and the final battle is fought.

Those who sit on that awful throne have a terrible sensation of falling, plummeting swiftly through Middle-earth, falling out of Arda and plunging into the endless void beyond, coming ever closer but never quite reaching the wall of night that surrounds all creation.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

Perils? You ask after peril *here*, of all places? There is nothing but peril here!

### DEFEATING DURIN'S BANE

The Balrog is a foe beyond the power of almost anyone who still dwells in Middle-earth. So too, though, was Shelob, the last daughter of Ungoliant, and it was a humble gardener from the Shire who dealt her a grievous wound. The workings of Fate are strange indeed, and it is possible, if exceedingly unlikely, that the Player-heroes might battle the Balrog and win. The Last Ring of the Dwarves (see page XX) coupled with Durin's Axe (see page XX) would be enough to raise a mortal hero to the status of legend.

Most likely, any victory over the Balrog is a temporary one. A hero might sacrifice themselves to allow the others to flee Moria, or to trap the Balrog in the depths. But this is your tale, your sub-creation — maybe Moria was freed from shadow long before the One Ring left Rivendell, and passed safely through welcoming halls. Or maybe some other foe steps in to take the Balrog's role (it is worth noting that in some of Tolkien's drafts, the foe encountered at Durin's Bridge was a Great Troll, or Saruman, or a Ringwraith).

# FOUNDATIONS OF STONE

– HIDDEN –

*"Deep is the abyss that is spanned by Durin's Bridge, and none has measured it,' said Gimli. 'Yet it has a bottom, beyond light and knowledge,' said Gandalf. 'Thither I came at last, to the uttermost foundations of stone."*

**RUMOUR**

None

**OLD LORE**

None

## BACKGROUND

Both Dwarves and Goblins have walked in the deep, dark places of the world, far from the sunlight — but neither of them knows all the secrets of the depths. Before the Dwarves built Khazad-dûm, before Durin woke and walked alone, other things were here. Perhaps only Tom Bombadil remembers them, for he knew the dark under the stars when it was fearless — before the Dark Lord came from Outside.

The Dwarves never reached these foundations of stone, but things gnawed their way up from below after Moria was abandoned.

The abyss under the Bridge of Khazad-dûm leads down to this level, as do a handful of secret paths from the mines. Only a few living creatures in Moria know these paths: Old Scratch (see page XX), the priest Thu (see page XX), and Durin's Bane.

## LOCATIONS

No map of the Foundations of Stone exists, nor can it be charted.

### 1. GNAWED TUNNELS

The tunnels here were not dug or carved, they were gnawed, the tooth-marks are still visible on the rocks. The stone below the roots of the mountains is riddled with such tunnels, criss-crossing and spiralling endlessly, tracing the path of long-vanished creatures like worms in an apple. The tunnels vary in size; most are barely large enough for a Hobbit to stand upright, but others are alarmingly larger.

The tunnels are hot and uncomfortable, soundless and lightless, bereft of signs or landmarks; no one can hope to navigate them.

ILLUSTRATION TO COME

## 2. THE LAKES BELOW

The waters of the Misty Mountains rush east and west, feeding the great Anduin and sullen, mercurial Greyflood — but they also pour down, filtering through the rock over long centuries to pool here in the uttermost depths. The lakes sometimes swell and rise, flooding the mines above — floodwaters from heavy snowmelt many centuries ago. When they fall back, the waters leave behind the remains of strange creatures — pale fish, boneless things like disembodied hands, writhing lumps of slime with half-formed eyes.

One such lake lies far, far below Durin's Bridge.

### 3. THE ENDLESS STAIR

The Endless Stair was a secret path made for the kings of old, leading from the Tower of Durin atop the mountain to its lowest levels. The stair is surely beyond the craft of Dwarves or Men, for it runs unbroken down its narrow shaft for many thousands of feet, the steps circling a pillar of unknown stone that glimmers with its own internal light. The walls of the stair, too, are carved with runes — a litany of prayer to Aulë the Smith who made the Dwarves — and who, perhaps, also made this stair.

Seven secret doors open onto the stair — one at the bottom, one at the top, and five more through the Deeps, the Dwarrowdelf and the Mountain Halls above them. Curiously, the doors appear to predate the corridors or chambers they connect to — the stair was delved first, and the city built around it.

The rooms around the foot of the Endless Stair were destroyed long ago by the Balrog; from the fragments that remain, they were likely part of a temple complex, a place holy to the Dwarven kings.

## SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

### NAMELESS THINGS

There are creatures living down here, slimy horrors unlike anything that lives under the light of the sun. A few have crawled up to trouble the surface world, drawn by the presence of the Balrog. The many-tentacled monster that the Fellowship of the Ring encountered upon entering Moria is one of them.

### *The Watcher in the Water*

**The monster lurks in deep waters, emerging on the surface to attack with its long, pale green tentacles.**

**THE WATCHER IN THE WATER**
Secretive, Watchful

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 10

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100 | 3 | 10 | – | 4 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** Tentacle 3 (8/16, Seize)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Denizen of the Dark.* All attack rolls are *Favoured* while in darkness.

*Foul Reek.* Spend 1 Hate to cause all combatants engaged with the Watcher in the Water to *lose (1d)* on all attack rolls for the round.

*Hate Sunlight.* The Watcher in the Water loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Watcher in the Water that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the Watcher is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Horrible Strength.* If the Watcher in the Water hits and causes a Piercing Blow, spend 1 Hate to make the target's Protection roll *Ill-favoured*.

*Long Arms.* Spend 1 Hate to attack any Player-hero, in any combat stance, including rearward (same as *Great Leap*).

*Many Arms.* The Watcher in the Water makes one additional attack each round. Each time it receives a Wound, however, for the rest of the fight the Watcher in the Water can make one less attack.

*They did not halt until they were out of bowshot from the walls. Dimrill Dale lay about them. The shadow of the Misty Mountains lay upon it, but eastwards there was a golden light on the land. It was but one hour after noon. The sun was shining; the clouds were white and high.*

*They looked back. Dark yawned the archway of the Gates under the mountain-shadow. Faint and far beneath the earth rolled the slow drum-beats: doom. A thin black smoke trailed out. Nothing else was to be seen; the dale all around was empty. Doom. Grief at last wholly overcame them, and they wept long: some standing and silent, some cast upon the ground. Doom, doom. The drum-beats faded.*

# appendix

*"...that is another story, which can wait until after lunch."*

The present section contains information about excursions into Moria that are narrated in the main sources, and that happened before or after the default date for this supplement — the year 2965.

## Balin's Expedition

*"At last Gandalf looked up. 'It seems to be a record of the fortunes of Balin's folk,' he said. 'I guess that it began with their coming to Dimrill Dale nigh on thirty years ago…"*

Now Balin son of Fundin was one of the companions of Thorin Oakenshield on the great Quest of Erebor; he was the Company's look-out man, and of all the Dwarves was the closest to the Halfling Burglar who accompanied them. After the death of Smaug and the re-establishment of the Kingdom Under The Mountain, Balin became one of King Dáin's chief advisors, and for a time enjoyed great prosperity.

Some began to whisper that if one kingdom could be reclaimed, why not another? If the Shadow could be driven from Erebor, why not from the storied halls of Moria? For a time, this was but idle grumbling as Dwarves are prone to, but these whispers took root in the mind of Balin. Perhaps the old Dwarf was hungry for adventure once again, or maybe he felt that he — a cousin of the royal line — deserved a kingdom of his own, instead of serving in Dáin's court. It is known that Balin travelled west at times, visiting Bilbo in the Shire — he must have strayed south at times, and made pilgrimage to the Mirrormere.

Regardless of the nature of the desire that stirred him, Balin championed the cause of retaking Moria. For many years, King Dáin refused to give permission, but in the end the swell of support was too great, and against his better judgement he allowed Balin and Company to depart.

Balin took with him Ori and Óin, and a great many Dwarves, as well as weapons and supplies for an extended campaign. Although rumours suggested that the Orcs had not yet returned to Moria in great numbers, Balin knew that there would certainly be dangers and hardship along the way.

The Company departed Erebor in the spring of 2989.

### Playing the Expedition

If you wish to use Balin's Expedition as a mere part of your campaign, then a Company wandering in Wilderland might hear word of a great host of Dwarves marching south to the Dimrill Dale. After his experiences with Bilbo and Gandalf, Balin would doubtless welcome aid from doughty warriors, heroes, burglars — and even a Wizard, if he could find one. The Player-heroes might be employed as scouts exploring Moria, or as messengers bringing word back to Erebor. In this scenario, Balin meets his canonical fate in 2994 — the Dwarven colony is cut off by advancing Orcs, and Balin perishes at Mirrormere. The Player-heroes might never know what became of their erstwhile allies.

Another option is to play through the Expedition, from glorious beginning to its last days. Your Player-heroes should mostly be Dwarves, although a Man of Dale or Lake-town or maybe a Hobbit or two is perfectly acceptable. The Player-heroes are Balin's inner circle of advisors and champions; the Loremaster plays the old Dwarf, but Balin heeds the counsel of his friends and it is up to the Player-heroes to make the key decisions.

Is the Expedition doomed? Almost certainly. As long as the Balrog walks the Halls of Durin, retaking the city is impossible. However, the actions and choices of the Company may result in the Expedition lasting longer than the canonical five years, or escaping back to Erebor with treasure and trophies.

Note that Balin returns to Moria in the year 2989 — almost 25 years later than the default date for a *The One Ring* campaign. All the information contained in this volume refers to the situation in 2965.

### 2989 — THE JOURNEY SOUTH

The Expedition was too large to travel the Elf-path (and the Elf-king would not have welcomed so many Dwarves tramping through his lands), so Balin led his followers west from Erebor, travelling the perilous lands between the northern edge of Mirkwood and the Grey Mountains. They followed the Great River south through the land of the Beornings. There, they halted for many weeks while their leaders negotiated over the price of the crossing. This delay was put to good use; not only did the Dwarves stock their supplies with Beorning honey-cakes and mead, but they also sent scouting parties ranging ahead to Dimrill Dale.

These scouts returned with good tidings — the East-gate was open and undefended, and there were few signs of Orcs in the vicinity of the First Hall. (What the scouts did not know was that the Orcs of Moria had recently fought a bloody civil war, and their numbers were much reduced).

It was well into the grey days of autumn that the Expedition finally crossed the Anduin and continued south again. They settled in the Dimrill Dale, setting up a base camp amid the ruins, and wintered there.

#### SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

- **CROSSING THE GREY MOUNTAINS:** Even though the mountains have been scourged of Goblins, there are still perils here — and a slow-moving procession of Dwarves is a tempting target for Dragons and outlaws.
- **THE QUEST OF THE BEORNINGS:** What price might the Beornings charge for fording the River? Before the Council of Elrond, Glóin grumbles that their tolls are high, and that they are not fond of Dwarves — but if there is one thing the Dwarves of Erebor have, it is gold. Might the Beornings have demanded some other payment from the Dwarves than treasure?
- **SCOUTING MORIA:** Who dares take the first step across the threshold of the East-gate?
- **THE HUNT FOR THRÁIN'S RING:** Why would Dáin finally relent and permit Balin to go? As Glóin notes, *"it was partly in hope to find that ring that Balin went away"* — did Balin seek that ring for himself, or did Dáin ask for it as the price of his blessing? Certainly, recovering one of the lost Dwarf-rings would have assured Dáin's place in the pantheon of great Dwarf-kings. While Balin hoped the ring might be found in Moria, he knew from Gandalf's tales that Thráin was captured and taken to Dol Guldur; might he have sent scouts east to the ruins of the Hill of Sorcery?

#### NEW FELLOWSHIP UNDERTAKING: FORTIFY THE ANCIENT HALLS

*"We have taken the twenty-first hall of North end to dwell in."*

If a Company enters Moria to reclaim it, then they must devote many long hours of toil to restore its ruined halls. This undertaking may only be performed in or near Moria, and only at a Landmark that has been cleansed of Orcs and other foes.

Choose this undertaking to increase the Hunt Threshold at the chosen Landmark by 4 (thus making it much less likely that foes or misfortunes will trouble the Company at that Landmark in future). If the Landmark is retaken by the Enemy, this bonus is lost.

### 2990–2991 — INTO THE DWARROWDELF

At first, the Dwarves met with great success. Balin divided his host into three Companies. One stayed outside in the camp in Dimrill Dale, guarding their stocks and gathering food and fuel. Another Company set themselves to restoring the safe portions of Moria, repairing the damage done by a thousand years of neglect and Orc-mischief. The third group, consisting of the most adventurous Dwarves, explored deeper into the city.

These explorers met with peril as they delved deeper. They encountered Orcs and other horrors, and found few of the treasures they had hoped to discover in the upper halls. Still, they secured much of the Dwarrowdelf, travelling as far as the Twenty-first Hall. Balin himself refused to enter Moria, saying he would not set foot in the halls of his ancestors until they were wholly cleansed of Orc-filth.

Meanwhile, the presence of the camp in Dimrill Dale attracted other foes. Goblins troubled the Dwarves, and while their fortified position was too strong to be overcome, Wargs prowled the dale by night.

### SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

- **RECLAIMING KHAZAD-DÛM:** Player-heroes are among those sent to explore the deeper reaches of the Dwarrowdelf.
- **GOBLINS LURK IN THE MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS:** Driving the Orc-hosts from their fastnesses relieves the danger to the base camp.
- **THERE ARE FEW TREES LEFT IN DIMRILL DALE:** Did the hungry axes of the Dwarves turn to the western eaves of Lothlórien?

### 2992 — THE JAWS CLOSE

News reached the Goblins of Mount Gundabad that there were Dwarves at the gate of Moria once more — and that one of the slayers of Bolg was among them! The Orcs gathered their forces and marched south through hidden tunnels. They attacked under cover of darkness, overwhelming the camp at Dimrill Dale. Many perished; the survivors, including Balin, retreated into Moria.

The rest of the year was a bloody, grinding fight for control of the Second Hall and Durin's Bridge. The Dwarves feared being cut off from fresh supplies of food and water; the Orcs feared the Dwarves' axes and swords, and preferred to defeat their enemies with hunger and despair instead of direct assault.

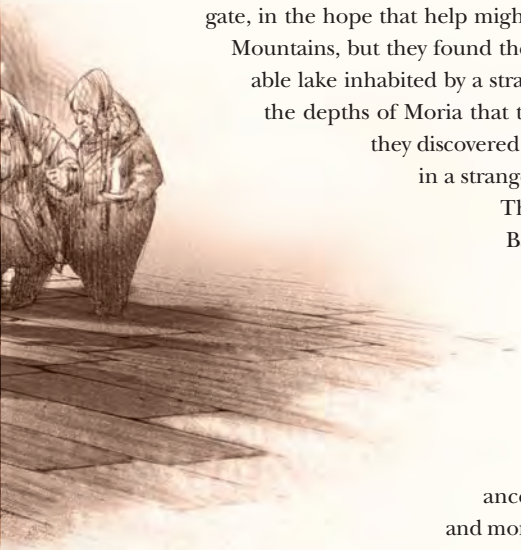
On Durin's Day, to shore up the morale of his followers, Balin finally established a throne in the secured Twenty-first Hall, and was acclaimed Lord of Moria.

#### SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

- **THE WEST-GATE CLOSES:** The evacuation of the Dimrill Camp was vital to the survival of the colony. If the Dwarves' food supply was destroyed by the Orcs, then they would have perished much sooner.
- **THE DWARVES ARE UPON YOU!** The defence of the Dwarf-hold called for keen blades and heroic deeds. How did so few Dwarves hold out against so many Orcs?

### 2993 — THE FALL OF BALIN

Balin began planning for a counter-attack. Messengers were sent to the Beornings, asking for their help in battling the Orcs, but the messengers were ambushed and slain before they reached the Old Ford. Scouts went west in search of the West-gate, in the hope that help might be fetched from the Blue Mountains, but they found the way blocked by an impassable lake inhabited by a strange monster. It was only in the depths of Moria that the Dwarves found hope — they discovered Mithril and other treasures in a strangely burnt section of the city.



The shadow lay heavily on Balin, and he feared that he had led his people to their doom. As the year wore on, and no word came from the Beornings, Balin decided to risk travelling to the Mirrormere, seeking the wisdom of the ancestors. An Orc slew him — and more Orcs came down the Dimrill Stair. These reinforcements came from the north, for the Orcs saw a chance to take revenge for their defeat at the Battle of Five Armies. They were inspired, too, by the growing Shadow in the East. As Sauron's power grew, so too did the war-lust of the Orcs.

#### SCHEMES AND TROUBLES

- **A GLEAM OF HOPE:** Balin sought aid from east and west, from the Beornings and the folk of the Ered Luin. Neither attempt succeeded — but what if the Player-heroes were able to break through the Orc-lines, or made it past the Watcher in the Water? What might have happened if allies came to the aid of the colony?
- **THE STEWARDS OF MORIA:** Who led the Dwarves after the fall of Balin?

### 2994 — THEY ARE COMING...

With the death of Balin, the Orcs were able to capture the Second Hall, cutting the Dwarves off from sunlight and the outside world. Doom was at hand, and there would be no escape. Drums sounded in the deep. *They are coming…*

#### A TALE OF YEARS OF BALIN'S REIGN

**2989:** Balin leaves Erebor

**2990:** Balin's Expedition drives the Orcs away from the East-gate and the Guardpost. They press onto the Dwarrowdelf, and establish themselves in the Twenty-first Hall.

**2991:** The expedition goes in search of fabled treasures of Moria. Balin is crowned Lord of Moria.

**2992:** Orc counter-attacks in Dimrill Dale threaten to cut the colony off from the East-gate and its supply routes. Óin is sent west to seek out the Hollin-gate and find alternate sources of food for the Dwarves.

**2994:** Balin's expedition ends in failure. The West-gate is barred by the Watcher in the Water; Orcs ambush Balin at Mirrormere and retake the East-gate.

# I TOO ONCE PASSED THE DIMRILL GATE

*"I do not wish to enter Moria a second time."*

Both Gandalf the Grey and Aragorn entered Moria long before the events narrated in *The Lord of the Rings*. Neither of their journeys happened around 2965, but a game might include references to Gandalf's expedition, and a long-running campaign might incorporate Aragorn's abortive journey.

## 2849 – THE SEARCH FOR THRÁIN

Gandalf goes looking for Thráin II, father of Thorin Oakenshield, sometime after 2841. Thráin, of course, was caught by servants of Sauron and imprisoned in Dol Guldur. They stole the last of the Seven from him, and the loss of the Ring broke his mind. Alas, Gandalf arrived too late to save the Dwarf-king, but did retrieve the vital map and key to Erebor. But all that is the prologue to another story.

Before braving the dungeons of the Necromancer, Gandalf entered Moria in search of Thráin. This was likely in 2848 or 2849, as the Wizard's quest grew more desperate. We know that Gandalf entered from the east (consistent with him searching the Vales of Anduin) and passed all the way through Moria, leaving via the Doors of Durin.

### THE STATE OF MORIA

2849 is some fifty years after the bloody Battle of Nanduhirion, when the power of the Orcs of Moria was broken for the first time. At this time the Orcs of the Misty Mountains were at war with Rohan, so their numbers in the city were further depleted. But the Lord of Moria in this era was Bolg, son of Azog. The Orc warlord craved revenge for the murder of his father, and nursed bitter hatred against the line of Durin. There was every chance that Thráin languished in the dungeons of Bolg.

### THE QUEST

Gandalf likely proceeded straight from the Second Hall of Old Moria into the Dwarrowdelf. He probably did not descend any further than the Third Deep, and we know that he did not visit the Chamber of Mazarbul. Bolg, being more arrogant than any of the current Orcs, took the King's Hall (page XX) as his throne room, and employed the Armouries of the Third Deep (page XX) as a prison.

Now, Gandalf travelled all the way through Moria to the West-gate, instead of going back the way he came. It is unlikely that he thought he could search all the labyrinthine caverns and mines; did Thráin leave some clue behind suggesting his destination? It's known that the Last of the Seven had begun to prey on Thráin's mind, so he might have gone seeking ring-lore amid the ruins of West Moria. Alternatively, perhaps Gandalf fled west because the east was blocked — by, say, a host of vengeful Orcs!

### THE COMPANIONS

While the Grey Pilgrim often wandered alone, it's likely that Gandalf was not so foolish as to enter Moria without doughty companions. In *The Hobbit*, he laments that "mighty Warriors and Heroes" are not to found in time for the Quest of Erebor, but he might have brought some with him on the quest for Thráin — a Ranger, maybe, or a Rider of Rohan with a grudge against the Orcs. It's also Gandalf who suggests that bringing a burglar would be an excellent idea, so he might have visited the Shire to fetch, say, some adventurous daughter of Bullroarer Took.

Dwarves, too, might have accompanied Gandalf. As Dáin was not yet King there was no prohibition on entering Moria, although given the fate of Thrór, only the most foolhardy dared even contemplate an expedition into the fabled halls. Most Dwarves in that era were still dreaming of a return to Erebor, for the loss of the Kingdom Under The Mountain was a fresh and stinging wound, and fighting a solitary Dragon atop a definitely-real pile of treasure seemed a more reasonable quest than facing unknown foes for uncertain reward. Still, any true-hearted Dwarf would have eagerly gone looking for Thráin, son of Thrór.

What became of these companions? Certainly, Gandalf was much more sanguine about the Fellowship's chances of passing through Moria alive than Aragorn, so it may be surmised that some or all of them survived. Of course, the quest for Thrór was some 116 years ago, beyond the lifespan of Man

### RECALLING THE SEARCH FOR THRÁIN

If the Player-heroes find some record or diary recounting the Search for Thráin, or question one of those who entered Moria on that quest, they may learn of:

- The Vault of Uruktharbun (page XX)
- The Armouries of the Third Deep (page XX)
- The Ledge of Woe (page XX)
- The Imperishable Hall (page XX)
- The Den of Forgotten Stars (page XX)

Furthermore, Gandalf wondered about the fate of the last king of Moria, Náin I. He correctly guessed that Náin's followers would have buried their king with all possible honours — a hint towards the existence of The Last Redoubt (see page XX).

or Hobbit. Maybe there is some elderly Dwarf in the Blue Mountains who recalls his long-ago adventure with the Wizard, or there's a diary in a Tookborough attic with hand-drawn maps of Moria. (Another possibility — the treasure-hunter Amelia Kern of Tharbad (*Ruins of the Lost Realm*, page 14) is too young to have participated in the search for Thráin, but whoever mentored her in treasure-hunting could have done so, and passed down secrets to her.)

## 2980 — ARAGORN'S JOURNEY

Aragorn too entered Moria via the Dimrill Gate, but he reveals no knowledge of West Moria or the Doors of Durin, suggesting he left the way he came in. Unlike the Search for Thráin, which must have happened between 2841 and 2850, Aragorn's journey in Moria could have happened any time between when he first set forth from the safety of Rivendell (2952) and the Great Years (3018/3019).

One possibility is that he entered Moria as part of his search for Gollum between 3001 and 3017. Certainly, it is plausible that he might have sought Gollum near the creature's old haunts under the Misty Mountains. However, Aragorn's words in The Fellowship of the Ring (*"if you pass the doors of Moria, beware!"*) hint at a darker, more tragic tale.

In the year 2980 of the Third Age, Aragorn returned from his errantry in the Southlands. For thirty years, he had served in the armies of Rohan and Gondor, disguised as the warrior Thorongil. He had excelled in the service of both King and Steward, and his star had risen to such heights in Gondor that the Steward's son Denethor grew jealous of Thorongil's influence over Ecthelion. As Thorongil, Aragorn led the assault upon the Havens of Umbar, and saved Gondor from the predations of the Corsairs.

Aragorn returned from his errantry a man full-grown, the mantle of his destiny as Isildur's Heir heavy upon him. He went to Lórien to rest, and there he met again the lady Arwen Evenstar, and upon the green grass of Cerin Amroth they plighted their troth.

Afterwards, Aragorn returned to Rivendell — but what road did he take? The safest way to cross the Mountains was via the High Pass, but the shorter route from Lórien leads over the Redhorn Pass. He must have known, too, that Arwen's mother Celebrían was wounded on that pass, and thoughts of Arwen passing into the West might have weighed on his mind.

Might Aragorn, consumed by a dark mood, have tried his strength against the dark of Moria?

### THE STATE OF MORIA

Moria, in the years before Balin's Expedition, was much as described in this supplement. The chief difference is that the number and strength of Mordor-orcs has grown as they receive reinforcements from Dol Guldur.

### THE QUEST

It's unlikely that so great a tracker as Aragorn would have become lost in Moria; nor is it likely that a hardened warrior such as he would have referred to battling with Orcs by saying "the memory is very evil". We know, too, that Aragorn failed to reach the West-gate.

What did he encounter on the way that forced him to retreat? He would have warned Gandalf of Orcs if he had encountered any of the Orcish bands on his journeys, so it seems more likely he met some unexpected foe that crawled out of the depths.

### EARLIER ERRANTRIES

While the 2980-date is both thematically and geographically convenient, the Loremaster can move Aragorn's journey to fit their campaign. Aragorn might have entered during his early adventures between 2952 and 2957 (perhaps in the company of the sons of Elrond), or have visited Moria during his service to King Thengel of Rohan. Little memory of Moria is preserved among the Rohirrim, save as a tale of terror from ancient days, but Orcs from the Black Pit have often troubled the northern border of Rohan.

## *New Nameless Thing — the Wailing Horror*

*"Pippin sat miserably by the door in the pitch black; but he kept on turning around, fearing that some unknown thing would crawl up out of the well."*

This thing crawled up out of the depths, and now dwells near the Second Hall — but at times it creeps out the East-gate and lopes down to trouble the farmsteads along the Anduin Vales. The stout Men of that region have learned to dread the wailing wind. The monster lays waste to the houses and halls it attacks, and devours the bodies of its victims, but then — strangely and horribly — it collects trophies and tokens to carry back to Moria. It takes blankets, utensils, mismatched pieces of clothing, even children's toys, almost as if it seeks to convince itself that it might one day become human.

The Wailing Horror is as tall as a Troll, but gaunt and pale, clad only in thin greying hair. Its hide is faintly luminous in the dark. Its face is singularly hideous, for the eyes have atrophied while the mouth is hugely distended, bristling with altogether too many teeth. Its keening howl is like the wind whistling through leafless treetops.

**THE WAILING HORROR**
Hideous, Slender

**ATTRIBUTE LEVEL** 9

| ENDURANCE | MIGHT | HATE | PARRY | ARMOUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 90 | 2 | 9 | — | 3 |

**COMBAT PROFICIENCIES:** ite 3 (7/14, Pierce), Claw 3 (7/16, Seize)

**FELL ABILITIES:** *Deadly Wound.* Wounded targets make an *Ill-favoured* Feat die roll to determine the severity of their Injury.

*Hate Sunlight.* The Wailing Horror loses 1 Hate at the start of each round it is exposed to the full light of the sun.

*Hideous Toughness.* When an attack inflicts damage to the Wailing Horror that would cause it to go to zero Endurance, it causes a Piercing Blow instead. Then, if the Wailing Horror is still alive, its Endurance score is set back at half its maximum rating.

*Keening Wail.* Spend 1 Hate to make all Player-heroes who can hear the creature gain 2 Shadow points (Dread). Those who fail their Shadow test are daunted and cannot spend Hope for the rest of the fight.

*Snake-like Speed.* When targeted by an attack, spend 1 Hate to make the attack roll *Ill-favoured*.

### THE COMPANIONS

Aragorn was accompanied on his early adventures by companions from Rivendell — grim-faced older Rangers, fellow Dúnedain, and the Elf-lords Elladan and Elrohir. It's unlikely that a young Aragorn would have foolishly strayed into peril, so he must have had good cause to enter Moria — perhaps to rescue someone in need.

During his time as Thorongil, Aragorn was well-loved by the people of Gondor and Rohan, and doubtless had many comrades-in-arms who might have travelled with him. It was in this era, too, that the Steward Ecthelion called on "all men of worth from near and far" to enter the service of Gondor against the might of Mordor, so those comrades-at-arms might include Rangers, Dalish knights, or even Dwarven or Elven adventurers.

In either period, it's possible that Aragorn/Thorongil might have joined with other explorers bound for Moria, who remained oblivious to their companion's true nature until the very end…

### A PRISONER OF THE GOBLINS

*"The prisoners are NOT to be searched or plundered: those are my orders."*

Of course, it might be that Aragorn himself was a prisoner of the Goblins. His early adventures are unchronicled; it might be that he was waylaid in the Dimrill Dale on one of his journeys to Lothlórien, and he passed the Dimrill Gate in Goblin-chains. In this scenario, it's up to the Player-heroes to rescue young Aragorn before his identity is discovered. Most Moria-goblins have no idea what the Kingdom of Arnor was or what a Ranger might be (bloody Tark nonsense, they'd call it) — but a cunning emissary from Mordor would recognise the words Rivendell, Dúnedain, Elrond — and Isildur's Heir...

A captured Aragorn would be imprisoned on the Ledge of Woe (page XX) before being sent down to either the Den of Forgotten Stars (p. XX) to toil in the mines, or to the Hall of Judgement (page XX) to fight for the amusement of the Orcs. If the Mordor-orcs learn of this prisoner, they would doubtless launch a raid (perhaps with the aid of the Invisible Goblins of Goblin Village, page XX) to capture him for themselves.

# On Mithril

*'Mithril! All folk desired it. It could be beaten like copper, and polished like glass; and the Dwarves could make of it a metal, light and yet harder than tempered steel. Its beauty was like to that of common silver, but the beauty of Mithril did not tarnish or grow dim.*

Through their artistry, the Elven-smiths of Eregion and the Dwarves found that Mithril could be transformed into other substances that had singular properties of their own. The secrets of this alchemy have not been entirely lost, even if they are now passed down only as theory, for no new Mithril has been mined by Elf or Dwarf in a thousand years.

## Species of Mithril

In Moria, Mithril can be encountered in its different forms.

### NATIVE MITHRIL

This is the 'raw' form of the metal — Mithril is found in nuggets of pure metal, not mixed with other substances like iron ore. It must still be washed and sorted to gather all the flecks and grains — even a speck of Mithril has value. The Dwarves used nitric acid to dissolve other substances, leaving only the precious metal.

Native Mithril can be shaped, beaten and polished, but in this form it is comparatively soft, being no harder than copper.

### TRUE MITHRIL

The Dwarves learned a way to process native Mithril into 'true' Mithril, preserving the metal's beauty while making it much stronger. The art of this metalcraft is not entirely lost — the Dwarves still remember how to do it, but they lack access to a supply of native Mithril. The technique was also preserved — or rediscovered — in the forges of Mordor, and now Sauron's smiths take the native Mithril smuggled out of Moria and make it anew into true Mithril (or worse, Sullied Mithril).

While the smelters and forges needed to make true Mithril still exist in Moria, none of the Orcs know the secret techniques required.

The other, rarer alloys of Mithril begin with True Mithril.

### ITHILDIN

It reflects only starlight and moonlight, and slumbers until touched by one who speaks words long forgotten in Middle-earth (a Scholar, or any other Player-hero with at least four ranks in **LORE**). Ithildin can be made into an ink and painted with a pen or brush, and used to make secret moon-letters that are visible only in moonlight. Dwarven Kings and Elven Lords alike write letters in *Ithildin*, so that the messages go unseen.

### MITHRIL-STEEL

Mithril is so expensive that it was almost unheard-of to make weapons or armour from pure Moria-silver. Instead, the Dwarves alloyed steel and Mithril. The Mithril does not mix evenly with the molten steel, but forms a network of hair-thin veins through the metal, as fine and beautiful as the trembling veins in a tree-leaf or the foam on a breaking wave. The process makes the steel much stronger than before. Mithril-steel looks identical to normal steel except under the light of the full moon, when the fine veins can be seen.

### ERCELEB

Its cousin Ithildin reflects starlight and moonlight; Erceleb drinks in the silvery light as though thirsty. Erceleb is a dull grey in colour by daylight or torchlight, but appears pitch black in moonlight or starlight. The Dwarves used Erceleb deep underground to mark their hidden doors, for it glows when awoken, giving up its swallowed starlight with a brilliant glow. Erceleb can also be used to capture memories along with the starlight or moonlight; if words are spoken to an object made of Erceleb in intense moonlight, then those words are repeated by the object when the metal is later awakened.

### THILEVRIL

Thilevril was a form of Mithril drawn into exceedingly thin wires, so thin they were almost invisible unless the light caught them just right, yet still immensely strong and sharp. It was used for making musical instruments, especially harps, for strings or reeds of Thilevril could reach notes beyond the range of other instruments. Thilevril was also, rarely, used to make bow-strings or nets, or as tripwires. Orcs have been known to dismantle Thilevril-harps and use the strings to make whips of astounding cruelty.

### THE BURDEN OF MITHRIL

**Mithril is astoundingly light, much more so than gold or iron. Even unforged 'native' Mithril is exceedingly valuable, being worth five times its Load.**

A Player-hero carrying a Treasure made mostly of Mithril (or one of its related alloys) adds only 1 point to their Load score for every 10 Treasure points, not counting the workmanship or any other factors.

### SULLIED MITHRIL

This abomination is a new devilry out of Mordor, made from Mithril ore sent as tribute from Moria. Sullied Mithril becomes hotter when a word of command is spoken, allowing a weapon forged from this alloy to burn hotter than a firebrand, or even burst into flames.

*"Old fool!' he said. 'Old fool! This is my hour. Do you not know Death when you see it? Die now and curse in vain!' And with that he lifted high his sword and flames ran down the blade."*

## Mithril Enchanted Rewards

Moria is vast and partly unexplored. While very rare, famous weapons and armour forged from Mithril can still be found in Khazad-dûm, but also elsewhere — for example, the helms of the Guards of the Citadel of Minas Tirith are wrought of Mithril, heirlooms from the glory of old days.

The Loremaster may introduce the following new enchanted rewards as part of treasure hoards found in Moria, or even outside of it.

### MITHRIL HELM

- **CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven
- **ITEM:** Helm

A helm made of Mithril has a Load rating of 0.

### MITHRIL SHIELD

- **CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven
- **ITEM:** Shield

A buckler made of Mithril has a Load rating of 0 and can be used together with a 2-handed weapon. A shield and a great shield made of Mithril have a Load rating of 0 and 2, respectively.

### MITHRIL WEAPON

- **CRAFTSMANSHIP:** Dwarven
- **ITEM:** Close combat weapon

This quality lowers the Load rating of a weapon by 1, or by your corresponding Combat Proficiency rating, whichever is higher (to a minimum of 0 Load). Additionally, a 1-handed weapon made of Mithril can be used to make Brawling attacks.

# MORIA MAGICAL TREASURE INDEX

*There hammer on the anvil smote,*
*There chisel clove, and graver wrote;*
*There forged was blade, and bound was hilt;*
*The delver mined, the mason built.*
*There beryl, pearl, and opal pale,*
*And metal wrought like fishes' mail,*
*Buckler and corslet, axe and sword,*
*And shining spears were laid in hoard.*

The treasure items presented in the following section are not connected to any particular Landmark in Moria, and can be found in any Hoard.

## MARVELLOUS ARTEFACTS

**GEM OF THE STAG:** A disc of green glass, engraved with the image of a stag standing on a hilltop. The gem conveys a Blessing of **HUNTING**. Footprints seen through the disc glow faintly. The gem was made as a gift for the Elves of Eregion, and is especially potent in lands that remember them.

**SILVER DREAM OF THE SMITH:** This silver necklace is of such surpassing craftsmanship and delicacy that it inspires a Blessing of **CRAFT** in those who study it. Often, they share the dreams or memories of great smiths who lived in ages past.

**BRAZEN HEAD:** The cast head of a Dwarven scholar, with vocal cords of Mithril and eyes of polished quartz. Under moonlight, it whispers secrets — a Blessing of **LORE**. According to the tales, this was forged by the mad Dwarf-scholar Dero, who descended into unknown tunnels beneath the world and returned with strange tales and secrets.

**SCABBARD OF THUNDER:** An ornate sheath for a sword, made of polished black leather and brass, decorated with images of storm-clouds and lightning bolts. When a weapon is drawn from this scabbard, thunder rolls — a Blessing of **AWE**. The scabbard was made for a King of the North-men in the Second Age of the world.

**RING OF RIDDLES:** A ring of gold, set with a large red stone. Those who speak with the wearer of the ring feel as though they are relaxing by a fireside with merry company, no matter the circumstances. This is a Blessing of **RIDDLE**.

## WONDROUS ITEMS

**WAR-HORN OF THE UNDERWORLD:** Made from a Dragon's horn, bound in steel, and marked with runes of power, this horn has not been sounded since the elder days. It carries a Blessing of **BATTLE** and **ENHEARTEN**, but also a curse — if blown, whoever hastens to aid the bearer is doomed. Their Protection rolls in battle are *Ill-favoured*.

**STAFF OF THE ROADWARDEN:** Described in more detail on page XX, but this black staff bound in mithril grants a Blessing of **EXPLORE** and **SCAN** in addition to any other properties.

**HARP OF THE CASCADES:** This harp is associated with the Dimrill Stair, and with a maiden who dwelt there long ago. It is said she was in love with a shepherd who perished in the winter snows, and she took up her harp and sang a lament for him. She played until her fingers bled, so long that her heart froze and she too perished. Despite this sad tale, the harp bears no curse, and has Blessings of **SONG** and **INSIGHT**.

**IRON-SHOD BOOTS:** These boots were made for Dwarven messengers in the days when there were many Dwarven kingdoms. They are heavy boots with soles of iron, but despite that they are marvellously light and comfortable. They grant a Blessing of **ATHLETICS** and **TRAVEL**.

**CIRCLET OF QUEEN EDRYS:** A circlet of Mithril studded with pearls, this crown grants Blessings of **AWARENESS** and **COURTESY**. The circlet is marked with runes of law and judgement.

# Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost

*"After the end of the First Age the power and wealth of Khazad-dûm was much increased, for it was enriched by many people and much lore and craft when the ancient cities of Nogrod and Belegost in the Blue Mountains were ruined in the breaking of Thangorodrim."*

There were seven kings of the Dwarves, and they founded seven Houses. Durin was first and eldest, and his mansion of Khazad-dûm was the greatest. But there were mighty kings, too, in the cities of Belegost and Nogrod in the Blue Mountains. In ancient days, the Elven realm of Beleriand lay west of the mountains, and the Dwarves learned much from the Elves there — though they were not always friends — and grew masterful in craft, especially jewel-smithing. In return, the Elves learned much from them about smithcraft, an art the Dwarves were never outmatched at, even by the Noldor.

Then, alas, the world was shattered. The sea drowned Beleriand, and upheavals of the earth brought ruin to the twin cities. Some of the folk of Belegost and Nogrod remained in the Blue Mountains, where their descendants still dwell, but many more fled to the safety of Moria. They dwelt there, but kept a little apart from the dwarves of Durin's line. The Dwarves of Belegost and Nogrod had their own customs, their own noble lines — and though their treasure hoards were gone and they were forced to labour as common smiths, they still held themselves the equal of any Longbeard princeling.

## Characteristics

Today, many thousands of years since the days of Beleriand, few outsiders can tell the difference between a Dwarf of Durin's Folk and those of Belegost and Nogrod. There has

been so much intermarriage between the clans that once-distinctive traits like fiery-red beards or especially broad shoulders are no longer unique to one clan or another. Only scholars who delve into Dwarven genealogies can say which folk a Dwarf belongs to — but these divisions remain vitally important to the Dwarves.

And those who were not of Durin's Folk said also: Khazad-dûm was not our Father's house — what is it to us, unless a hope of treasure.

### CULTURAL BLESSING — REDOUBTABLE

Dwarves make light of burdens, especially when it comes to wearing armour.

> You halve the Load rating of any armour you're wearing (rounding fractions up), including helms (but not shields).

*"Gimli the Dwarf alone wore openly a short shirt of steel-rings, for dwarves make light of burdens…"*

### PETTY-DWARVES

Like other Dwarves, the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost cannot use great bows, great spears, or great shields. In addition, it is said that they love none but themselves.

> You can only choose another Dwarf as your Fellowship Focus.

### STANDARD OF LIVING — COMMON

The treasure of Erebor belongs to Durin's Folk; many of the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost can only envy their cousins' good fortune.

## ATTRIBUTES

Choose one set of Attributes, or roll a Success die:

| ROLL | STRENGTH | HEART | WITS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | 7 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 | 2 | 6 |

### DERIVED STATS

Calculate the following scores based on your chosen Attribute ratings:

| | |
|---|---|
| Endurance | STRENGTH + 22 |
| Hope | HEART + 8 |
| Parry | WITS + 10 |

### SKILLS

Copy the listed Skill ranks onto the character sheet; then, choose one Skill among the two underlined and mark it as *Favoured*.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AWE | 2 | ENHEARTEN | 0 | PERSUADE | 0 |
| ATHLETICS | 0 | TRAVEL | 2 | STEALTH | 1 |
| AWARENESS | 0 | INSIGHT | 0 | SCAN | 3 |
| HUNTING | 0 | HEALING | 0 | EXPLORE | 2 |
| SONG | 1 | COURTESY | 0 | RIDDLE | 2 |
| CRAFT | 3 | BATTLE | 0 | LORE | 2 |

### COMBAT PROFICIENCIES

Copy the following Combat Proficiency ranks onto the character sheet, selecting a preferred Proficiency when offered a choice.

| | |
|---|---|
| Axes OR Swords | 2 |
| Choose one Combat Proficiency | 1 |

### DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Choose two Distinctive Features among those listed: Cunning, Fierce, Proud, Rustic, Secretive, Stern, Wary, Wilful.

### LANGUAGES AND TYPICAL NAMES

As all Dwarves, the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost speak the Common Tongue, and jealously preserve a knowledge of their own strange language. After the destruction of their ancestral cities, they started adopting names in the tradition of the Dwarves of Durin's line.

## Virtues of the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost

The Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost can choose their Virtues from among those of the Dwarves of Durin's Folk, replacing *Broken Spells* and *Durin's Way* with the following:

### ANCIENT FIRE

Whether it is due to the mastery of their Creator, or to a simple accustoming to the heat of the forge, it is known that the Dwarves withstand elements more hardily than others.

- Raise your maximum Endurance rating by 1 point. Any Endurance loss from extreme cold, fire, and poison you suffer is reduced by one level (grievous to severe, severe to moderate, moderate to none).

*"...these are the descendants of the Naugrim of the Elder Days, in whose hearts still burns the ancient fire of Aulë the Smith..."*

### TELCHAR'S SECRETS

Telchar, one of the greatest smiths of your folk, wrought the Blade that was Broken in the deeps of time. As much as you can only hope to match his skill, many of his secrets have been revealed to you.

- Next Yule, you may either add a single Enchanted Reward of Dwarven craftsmanship to a mail armour or close combat weapon of your choice, or create a Marvellous Artefact (your choice).

*"...in metal-work we cannot rival our fathers, many of whose secrets are lost."*

# SOLO PLAY IN MORIA

*"Balin has set up his seat in the Chamber of Mazarbul…"*

## RECLAIMING KHAZAD-DÛM

In *The Lord of the Rings*, we learn of Balin's ill-fated expedition to reclaim the hallowed underhalls through the eyes of the Fellowship, who come upon Balin's tomb and the moldering bones of Dwarves pierced by goblin arrows and spears.

Fierce battles and desperate skirmishes were pitched across the width and breadth of this underground kingdom, though as readers, we only see the aftermath. For a time, before this great doom befell Balin's band, there was hope in Moria — a flickering ember in the hearts of Dwarf-kind. It is this ember of hope that you will kindle in your solo journeys.

### JOINING BALIN'S QUEST

With these guidelines and tools for solo play, you will explore Moria as a member of Balin's expedition, leading an intrepid Band of Dwarves. You and your Allies will face vast darkness and long-lost mysteries, entrenched foes and hidden perils, all in pursuit of a single, lofty goal — to return the heart of the Misty Mountains to its rightful keepers.

See page XXX to learn more about the history of Balin's expedition.

### HOW IT WORKS

This solo campaign offers rules and tools for managing your Band of Allies and navigating the dangers of the long dark as a solo player. You will create a character, recruit the starting members of your Band, and set off on perilous missions in pursuit of the dream of a restored Khazad-dûm.

As a solo player, you imagine these missions and take action from the perspective of your Player-hero; but you also resolve the actions of your Band of Allies, introduce encounters and challenges, and create details of the ruins of Moria. These rules include guidelines for Battles (page XXX) and Journeys (page XXX) alongside your Allies.

Inspirational tools and tables — in these solo rules and elsewhere in this supplement — offer the means of answering questions and generating events and locations during a mission.

Once a mission is completed or abandoned, you return to the Safe Haven of Balin's outpost in the First Hall to rest, recover, and plan your next foray into the long dark.

#### STRIDER MODE

Solo play within Moria is complementary to Strider Mode, a supplement for *The One Ring* that offers rules and tools for solo play, including expanded events for overland travel.

You can utilize Strider Mode in addition to these guidelines if your adventures take you beyond the confines of Moria. However, Strider Mode is *not* required to play a solo campaign in Moria.

If you prefer to explore Moria as a lone hero without the aid of a Band of Allies, you can use Strider Mode alongside some of the resources herein to help depict your lone exploration of these ancient halls.

# YOUR SOLO ADVENTURER

As you begin your solo Moria campaign, you create a Player-hero as you would in a traditional campaign guided by a Loremaster. Some additional considerations and guidelines are provided below.

## CRAFTING YOUR PLAYER-HERO

### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

As a solo player, your newly-created character receives additional points to spend on Skills and Combat Proficiencies, representing the resolve and competence that led them to serve as a trusted member of Balin's expedition.

> When allocating your previous experience (page 46 in *The One Ring* core rules), you have 15 points to spend instead of 10.

### CULTURE

As a leader in Balin's expedition, you are likely one of Durin's Folk or from among the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost. However, Balin knew better than most the value of allies among Elves, Hobbits, and Men, so you can feasibly originate from any culture of Middle-earth.

### CALLING

You and your Band have a shared Calling, a motivation that connects you and has put you on this perilous path. See page XXX for details.

### VIRTUES

Some Cultural Virtues offer benefits partly or solely for a Company of Player-heroes. The Allies among your Band are not created as standard Player-heroes, and are not considered a Company for the purpose of applying benefits from Virtues. Thus, be mindful of making a selection useful for a solo Player-hero.

### FELLOWSHIP RATING

The Fellowship score signifies the connection you share with your Allies and your ties to the broader community of folk who have joined Balin's expedition.

> You have a Fellowship score equal to 3 plus additional bonuses from Virtues, Cultural Blessings, and your Patron (+1 for Balin).

### FELLOWSHIP FOCUS

When playing as a solo Player-hero, you do not have a Fellowship Focus. You can ignore this aspect of character creation.

### HOPE AND SHADOW

You and your Band share Hope points and Shadow points. You are intrinsically linked by the Hope that drives you and the Shadow that plagues you.

> When creating your Player-hero, raise your maximum Hope by 5 points to represent the support of your Band.

## ADVENTURING AMONG BALIN'S EXPEDITION

### YOUR PATRON

Fittingly, your Patron is Balin himself, a Dwarf Lord and descendant of Durin. Following the successful quest to reclaim Erebor, Balin turned his sights on Moria, the grandest of the lost Dwarf kingdoms, and gathered others for a grand but perilous expedition.

For the solo player leading a Band of Allies, Balin's advantage extends to also aid any rolls in a Battle.

### PATRON BENEFITS:

**FELLOWSHIP BONUS:** +1

**ADVANTAGE:** *Balin's Counsel*

Spend Fellowship to make a combat roll (or a roll in a Battle) *Favoured*.

### YOUR SAFE HAVEN

At the start of your campaign, your Safe Haven is Balin's fledgling encampment in Moria's First Hall. From here, Balin coordinates the efforts of your Band as well as other expeditionary groups. This encampment represents a light in the darkness of Moria — a place where weary Dwarves can find kinship and respite. Your Band will return to this encampment across the Bridge of Khazad-dûm between delves into the Dwarrowdelf.

### COOPERATIVE PLAY

These rules are geared for solo play, but can also be used for a game in which two Player-heroes lead a Band of Allies together.

When you are playing together without a Loremaster, the normal conversation you would have with the other player is expanded to include the details of the world you inhabit. When a question or situation arises that would be resolved or depicted by the Loremaster, you both collaborate to decide what happens or use tools such as the Telling Table (page XXX) and Lore Table (page XXX) to help inspire an answer.

When you take action to lead the mission, such as during travel and battles, decide who is stepping to the forefront and making the roll in that moment. Let the skills and aspirations of your Player-heroes help drive the story, switching between them as appropriate.

# YOUR BAND

Your Band comprises trusted members of Balin's folk who accompany your Player-hero. Each member of the Band is an Ally, a steadfast Dwarf (or Dwarf-friend).

> At the start of the campaign, you have a fledgling Band of six Allies. As you complete missions and gain standing among the folk of Balin's expedition, you can recruit additional members.

The members of the Band are not created as standard Player-heroes. Instead, each Ally is given a quirk to personalize them, a Gift that can aid the Band, and a number of conditions to track their well-being. The Band as a whole also has its own characteristics and conditions. These components are summarized below. You can track these elements using the Mission Worksheet, while each member of your band is represented by an Ally Card.

[graphic of Mission Worksheet and Ally Cards]

## READINESS

Your Band is largely defined by a single Attribute: Readiness. This measures the overall experience and capability of your Allies.

At the start of your campaign, your Band is relatively inexperienced within the vast confines of Moria. However, the Band's Readiness can improve as Allies become Hardened against the dangers of the long dark.

> The starting Readiness for your Band is 4. With the successful completion of missions, you can award accomplished Allies with the Hardened status to improve your Readiness score. See page XXX for details.

Readiness is used to calculate your Band's default TN — the static difficulty level for all rolls made for the Band as a group or for an individual Ally.

> The Readiness TN is 20 minus its current value. The starting Readiness TN is 17.

## DISPOSITIONS

Your band has five Dispositions representing their focus and abilities: **EXPERTISE**, **MANOEUVRE**, **RALLY**, **VIGILANCE**, and **WAR**.

Dispositions are used instead of Skills and Combat Proficiencies when resolving challenges for the Band. A Disposition roll functions like a Skill roll.

> When rolling for the Band, roll one Feat Die and a number of Success Dice equal to the Disposition rating. Dispositions are rolled against the Band's Readiness TN.

The default rating for each Disposition is 2, but this is modified when you assemble your Allies for a mission (page XXX).

**EXPERTISE** is a broad Disposition, covering the Band's learned skills and knowledge. Activities such as crafting, first-aid, hunting, and scholarly lore all fall under **EXPERTISE**.

**MANOEUVRE** measures the Band's ability to travel at pace and navigate treacherous paths. It is also used when coordinated movement or speed is required, such as when fleeing a danger, or to avoid attention when sneaking through enemy-held territory. A smaller, lightly equipped band has a higher **MANOEUVRE** rating but a lower **WAR** rating.

**RALLY** represents your Band's hardiness, courage, camaraderie, and influence. It is used in tests to resist injuries and fatigue, stand together against fearful threats or oppressive environments, overcome internal squabbles, and compel others to their cause.

**VIGILANCE** represents your Band's attentiveness and awareness of their surroundings. It is used to detect threats, notice subtle details, maintain alertness during long watches, and conduct searches.

**WAR** represents the Band's combined strength, fighting prowess, and collective gear. **WAR** is used to overcome challenges through force, tactics, or intimidation. Most critically, **WAR** is rolled when engaged in Battles. A large band geared for war has a higher **WAR** rating but a lower **MANOEUVRE** rating.

## PERSONALIZATION

### GIFTS

Each Ally in your Band has a Gift, a role or characteristic that grants advantages.

When you recruit an Ally, choose a Gift or roll for one using the tables on page XXX — or come up with your own. Each Gift is unique and should not be shared among others in the Band.

When a relevant Gift aids an action for your Player-hero or the Band, you gain a bonus on that roll. See page XXX to learn more about using Gifts.

### QUIRKS

Quirks represent unique facets of an Ally's personality, outward appearance, or behaviour.

For each Ally in your Band, generate a Quirk using the tables on page XXX, or come up with your own.

## CONDITIONS

### INJURIES

Unlike your Player-hero, your Allies do not use Endurance points to measure their physical stamina. Instead, they suffer Injury conditions when failing to overcome a harmful or weakening incident. There are five levels of Injury conditions: fleeting, moderate, severe, grievous, and lingering.

> A roll to resist physical hardships is called an Endurance test, and is made using your Band's **RALLY** against their Readiness TN. When this test fails, an Ally suffers an Injury condition.

Immediate Injury conditions are also inflicted upon an Ally whenever the Band must suffer a Wound, such as during travel events.

Learn more about the Endurance test and Injury conditions on page XXX.

### FATIGUE

Your Player-hero tracks fatigue points normally, but fatigue among your Allies is measured through Fatigue conditions. There are four levels of Fatigue conditions: fatigued, faltering, spent, and collapsed.

> A roll to resist fatigue is called a Fatigue test, and is made using your Band's **RALLY** against their Readiness TN. When this test fails, an Ally suffers a Fatigue condition.

Learn more about Fatigue tests and Fatigue conditions on page XXX.

### BURDEN

You do not track Load ratings for your Band's gear. Instead, their Burden represents how heavily they are weighed down — as a group — by armour, weapons, supplies, and reclaimed resources or treasures. Burden is measured through four levels: light, medium, heavy, and overburdened.

When you set out on a mission, you decide whether to focus on strength of arms or on speed and subtlety. This decision impacts your starting Burden. Then, your Band's Burden can increase or decrease during the course of a mission as appropriate to what they pick up or leave behind.

Burden affects your Fatigue tests as described on page XXX. A light Burden aids these tests, while a heavier Burden makes them more difficult.

Learn more about setting your Band's Burden on page XXX, and adjusting their loadout in the midst of a mission on page XXX.

### WEARY

Hardships can escalate among your Band. When half or more (rounding up) of the Allies on a mission are lost or suffering a serious condition, the Band is made Weary.

> Weary has the same effect upon rolls for the Band as it does for a Player-hero — causing a 1–3 on Success dice to be read as a zero.

Learn more about the Weary condition for your Band on page XXX.

## Improving the Band

When an Ally distinguishes themself through acts of bravery, comradeship, or martial prowess, you can grant them Hardened status. This reflects that Ally's experience, their knowledge of Moria's perils, and their great deeds at your side. Optionally, you can also award a Hardened Ally a title to celebrate their exploits.

Including Hardened Allies in the roster of a mission bolsters the Band's overall strength and cunning.

Hardened status and titles are awarded during the Fellowship Phase. See page XXX to learn more.

## Roleplaying Your Allies

For the most part, you play from the perspective of your Player-hero, leading and directing your Allies. Their ability to take action and resist hardships is represented by Disposition rolls. But keep in mind these are free-minded folk, with their own hopes and fears, strengths and failings. They should not be portrayed as puppets under your complete control. If unsure of how an Ally will act or react in an unusual situation, use tools such as the Telling Table (page XXX) to reveal the answer.

Much like your Player-hero has depth beyond your character sheet, the Band is more than their stats and conditions. Gifts and quirks are a starting place. Find opportunities through the course of your adventures to deepen the personalities, talents, and foibles of your Allies. This may, in turn, inspire complications and opportunities in your story.

# Shared Callings

When you create your Player-hero, choose a Shared Calling for you and your Band instead of one unique to your character. The table below lists the available callings and their associated features.

- **DISPOSITION FOCUS:** This functions similarly to a Distinctive Feature. The Band is Inspired when testing the listed Disposition, gaining 2d instead of 1d when spending a point of Hope.
- **FAVOURED SKILLS:** Choose two of the three listed Skills and mark them as *Favoured* Skills for your Player-hero.
- **SHADOW PATH:** This is the path you and your Band will follow if you fail to resist Shadow's influence.

### FOLLOWING DIFFERENT PATHS

If you prefer, you can choose from the Shared Callings for your Band, and select a standard Calling for your Player-hero. A leader whose purpose is at odds with their followers can make for dramatic stories.

This approach may put you on different Shadow Paths. If so, select the most relevant path when triggering a bout of madness. If you are affected by the madness, make it your path. If an ally suffers a bout of madness, advance along their path.

Within Moria, you also have the option of using the Moria-madness Shadow Path for both you and your Band (see page XXX).

### SHARED CALLINGS

| CALLING | DISPOSITION FOCUS | FAVOURED SKILLS (CHOOSE TWO) | SHADOW PATH |
|---|---|---|---|
| Reclaimers | EXPERTISE | CRAFT, LORE, SCAN | Dragon-sickness |
| Pathfinders | MANOEUVRE | ATHLETICS, EXPLORE, TRAVEL | Lure of Secrets |
| Standard-bearers | RALLY | ENHEARTEN, PERSUADE, SONG | Lure of Power |
| Guardians | VIGILANCE | AWARENESS, HEALING, INSIGHT | Path of Despair |
| Vanguards | WAR | AWE, BATTLE, STEALTH | Curse of Vengeance |

# GATHERING ALLIES

*"You are not without allies, even if you know them not."*

Use the tables in this section to generate the details of your Allies, giving each of them a Gift, quirk, and a name.

Other characteristics of your Allies will come to the fore as you interact and adventure with them. These aspects offer a baseline for you to build upon through play and discovery.

## YOUR STARTING BAND

You begin your campaign with six Allies in your Band. You will have opportunities to recruit additional Allies — bolstering your numbers or replacing those lost to the perils of Moria — during the Fellowship Phase (see page XXX). For now, generate your six Allies by picking or rolling on the tables below for each of them, and record their details on Ally Cards.

### MEETING BALIN'S FOLK

When the narrative leads you to interact with comrades outside of your Band, you can use the tables found in this section to generate other Dwarves involved in Balin's expedition, such as those belonging to other exploratory groups or devoted to tasks within Balin's camp.

## GIFTS

Gifts are a useful focus that each Ally lends to your Band. When an Ally's Gift directly contributes to an action for the Band, or if an Ally is acting independently using their Gift, *gain (1d)* on the roll. See more about using Gifts on page XXX.

**SUCCESS DIE: 1–2**

| FEAT DIE | GIFT |
|---|---|
| 👁 | **GOBLIN-SLAYER:** Accustomed to fighting orcs, carries trophies of their kills |
| 1 | **HEALER:** Carries bandages, forager of herbs, treats wounds |
| 2 | **COOK:** Carries a pot, guards a stash of seasoning, prepares nourishing meals |
| 3 | **STONE-SEER:** Attuned to caves and tunnels, identifies minerals |
| 4 | **DEAD-EYE:** Carries a bow, spots enemies from afar, strikes from a distance |
| 5 | **MIGHTY:** Possesses immense strength, hardier than most |
| 6 | **PROWLER:** At home in the shadows, light on their feet, moves unseen |
| 7 | **INHERITOR:** Noble upbringing, name holds sway, wears heirloom armour |
| 8 | **COURTEOUS:** Learned in customs and manners, skilled in negotiation |
| 9 | **WATCHFUL:** Keen eyes pierce the darkness, always on lookout |
| 10 | **FLEET:** Quick-moving and graceful on their feet |
| Y | **MUSICIAN:** Carries an instrument, lifts spirits with song, keeper of lore |

### SUCCESS DIE: 3–4

| FEAT DIE | GIFT |
|---|---|
| 👁 | **GRIM FURY:** Rage inspires fear, merciless in combat, uncanny strength |
| 1 | **IRON GUT:** Resistant to illness and disease, sniffs out rot and poison |
| 2 | **SCOUT:** Adept at finding safe paths, rarely gets lost |
| 3 | **ARTIST:** Carries charcoal and parchment, identifies symbols, preserves history |
| 4 | **SMITH:** Carries metalworking tools, understands the craft, identifies items |
| 5 | **CARTOGRAPHER:** Carries maps, knowledgeable of paths and chambers |
| 6 | **CLIMBER:** Carries rope and pinions, scales walls, traverses difficult terrain |
| 7 | **INDOMITABLE:** Immovable in combat, ignores pain, incredible fortitude |
| 8 | **VAULTBREAKER:** Carries tools for disabling traps and locks |
| 9 | **BIRD-FRIEND:** Accompanied by a loyal bird companion, used to scout, spy |
| 10 | **SHIELD-BEARER:** Protector of allies, front-line defender, draws enemy focus |
| ᚠ | **NATURAL LEADER:** Rallies comrades, instils courage, coordinates efforts |

### SUCCESS DIE: 5–6

| FEAT DIE | GIFT |
|---|---|
| 👁 | **SHADOW-TOUCHED:** Deep knowledge of the Shadow, haunted by visions |
| 1 | **LOREKEEPER:** Carries a tome of knowledge, keeps a ledger, recalls lore |
| 2 | **CHARMER:** Uncanny charisma, smooth-talker, adept at parlaying |
| 3 | **GEM-HOUND:** Sniffs out valuables, gem-knowledge, carries mining tools |
| 4 | **BEAST-WHISPERER:** Attuned to animals, commune with beasts, carries treats |
| 5 | **FLAME-TENDER:** Never lets the fire go out, keeper of light, exudes warmth |
| 6 | **BREW-MASTER:** Carries keg and tankards, readily pours drinks |
| 7 | **MIRTHFUL:** Carries pipeweed, quick with a song or poem, lifts spirits |
| 8 | **QUARTERMASTER:** Carries extra supplies, tracks resources |
| 9 | **GREEN THUMB:** Good with plant life, identifies useful herbs |
| 10 | **SOOTHSAYER:** Carries divining runes, tells fortunes, guides efforts |
| ᚠ | **BATTLE-TESTED:** Carries weapon of renown, instils awe and fear in enemies |

## quirks

Quirks are unique aspects of an Ally's appearance, personality, or behaviour that set them apart from the rest of the Band. Generate a quirk for each Ally by first rolling a Success Die and then rolling on the corresponding quirk table.

### SUCCESS DIE: 1–2

| FEAT DIE | QUIRK |
|---|---|
| 👁 | Always ready with a song |
| 1 | Bears grisly battle scars |
| 2 | Braided beard down to their knees |
| 3 | Can fall asleep anywhere |
| 4 | Casual with vulgar language |
| 5 | Constantly sipping from a flask |
| 6 | Fingers adorned with rings |
| 7 | Obsessed with food |
| 8 | Prefers to be alone |
| 9 | Smokes a pipe incessantly |
| 10 | Infamous prankster |
| ᚠ | Wears an eye patch |

**SUCCESS DIE: 3–4**

| FEAT DIE | OUIRK |
|---|---|
| ᛟ | Carries a prized bag of spices and herbs |
| 1 | Carries legendary weapon of forebears |
| 2 | Hard of hearing |
| 3 | Keeps a well-worn tankard on their belt |
| 4 | Proudly wears a token of another culture |
| 5 | Shield adorned with battle trophies |
| 6 | Speaks only in Khuzdul |
| 7 | Speaks with a strange, regional accent |
| 8 | Overly eager to please |
| 9 | Weapons/armour encrusted with gems |
| 10 | Wears a necklace of goblin ears |
| ᚠ | Wields a pickaxe as a weapon |

**SUCCESS DIE: 5–6**

| FEAT DIE | OUIRK |
|---|---|
| ᛟ | Always scribbling in a journal |
| 1 | Constantly covered in soot and grime |
| 2 | Deeply religious; carries a holy symbol |
| 3 | Draped in animal furs |
| 4 | Dwarf-friend of another culture |
| 5 | Fiercely guards old family memento |
| 6 | Always expects the worst |
| 7 | Harbours a fascination with rocks |
| 8 | Often lost in thought |
| 9 | Ready with an old war story at any time |
| 10 | Wears a fully-enclosed helm; rarely removes it |
| ᚠ | Wispy beard shrouds a youthful face |

## NAMES

To generate a name for each Ally in your Band, first roll a Success Die, then roll on the corresponding name column. Note that the names on these tables are intended for Dwarves; for Dwarf-friends of other cultures serving in the Band, choose an appropriate name from those listed for each culture in *The One Ring* core rules.

You'll find additional Dwarvish names in *The One Ring* core rules, page 35.

| SUCCESS DIE: 1–2 | | 3–4 | 5–6 |
|---|---|---|---|
| FEAT DIE | NAME | NAME | NAME |
| ᛟ | Arn | Dagnar | Barríz |
| 1 | Boral | Frea | Bera |
| 2 | Brunhilde | Fyrn | Edril |
| 3 | Deurgen | Glori | Erud |
| 4 | Faldor | Idrial | Forá |
| 5 | Harald | Ingól | Gamrin |
| 6 | Nóriq | Lora | Innerva |
| 7 | Odger | Magda | Jerlán |
| 8 | Skarden | Rhoven | Ogdurn |
| 9 | Tolif | Runa | Orón |
| 10 | Torden | Schvard | Toli |
| ᚠ | Várrik | Ula | Viq |

# PLANNING A MISSION

In this phase, you decide the nature of your upcoming mission and ready the members of your Band. Have a fresh Mission Worksheet handy — you'll use this sheet to note your Band's stats and assemble your roster of Allies.

Complete this phase by following these steps:

1. Set the Mission Objective
2. Choose Your Allies
3. Set the Band's Composition
4. Set the Hunt Threshold
5. Begin the Mission

## SET THE MISSION OBJECTIVE

To randomly determine the goal of a mission, as directed by Balin or other expedition leaders, roll on the Mission Objective table. Expand on the prompt in the table to flesh out the nature of the mission.

The quests in the Mission Objective table are not the sum total of possibilities for your adventure. Mission objectives will also emerge naturally from your story as you gain footholds, make discoveries, and encounter perils on your expeditions into Moria. Whenever possible, let the events and outcome of one mission lead to the next. Set your goals from your Player-hero's perspective. If your plans run contrary to what you imagine as Balin's own strategies, consider taking part in a Council to convince Balin and other Dwarf leaders of the importance of your objective.

For a more abstract mission prompt, roll on the Lore table (page XXX) and interpret the results in the context of Balin's goals here in Moria.

| SUCCESS DIE: 1–3 | | 4–6 |
|---|---|---|
| FEAT DIE | MISSION | MISSION |
| | Repel enemies encroaching upon a reclaimed area | Defeat a champion of the Shadow (Archfoe) and their minions |
| 1 | Seek a lost relic thought to be hidden in Moria | Embark beyond the walls of Moria to deliver a message home |
| 2 | Scout out the enemy's fortifications and report your findings | Escort a beleaguered expeditionary group back to a Safe Haven |
| 3 | Chart a safe route to a landmark | Seek out the source of a corruption tainting food and water |
| 4 | Reclaim an important landmark | Establish a new expeditionary camp |
| 5 | Free captives held by enemy minions | Capture an enemy spy and discover what they know |
| 6 | Deliver an urgent message to another expeditionary group | Recover lost records of ancient Dwarves |
| 7 | Open up a new road or gate previously blocked | Reclaim a captured treasure |
| 8 | Fortify the defences in a remote area | Find a missing expeditionary group and escort any survivors to safety |
| 9 | Investigate rumours of a nameless fear | Find and secure a hidden passage exploited by the enemy |
| 10 | Secure a cache of important resources | Secure a storehouse of mithril ingots |
| | An Ally reveals a personal goal (roll on the Lore table for inspiration) | Balin trusts you with a mission of personal significance (roll on the Lore table for inspiration) |

## Choose Your Allies

Select available Allies from your Band's roster to accompany you on this mission. Write the names of the selected Allies on your Mission Worksheet, and assemble their Ally cards for reference.

At the start of the campaign, you have only six Allies in your Band. This is the maximum you can lead on your first mission.

If a previous mission brought hardships to your Allies, any who did not fully recover from a condition during the Fellowship Phase still suffer that condition as you begin a new mission. If you bring them along, mark those condition boxes on your Mission Worksheet.

Finally, adjust your Readiness score for this mission based on the number of Hardened Allies joining you (if any). Hardened Allies have proven themselves on a mission, and were awarded that status in the Fellowship Phase (page XXX). If this is your first mission, none of your Allies are Hardened.

> Your Readiness score is 4. If you are accompanied by one or more Hardened Allies, increase that score using the table below. Mark your Readiness score and your Readiness TN (20–Readiness) on your Mission Worksheet.

**READINESS BONUS**

| HARDENED ALLIES ON MISSION | BONUS |
|---|---|
| None | +0 |
| One | +1 |
| Two or more | +2 |
| Half the Band (rounding up) or more | +3 |
| All members of the Band | +4 |

## Set The Band's Composition

Based on the needs of the mission and the Allies you have selected, decide the makeup of your Band by setting the size, war gear loadout, and specialization using the table below.

> Each Disposition defaults to a rating of 2. Adjust those values using the tables below. Mark down your final Disposition ratings and your Burden on the Mission Worksheet.

**COMPOSITION**

| SIZE | MODIFIERS |
|---|---|
| Small Band (1–4) | –1 WAR/+1 MANOEUVRE |
| Medium Band (5–8) | – |
| Large Band (9–12) | +1 WAR/–1 MANOEUVRE |
| **WAR GEAR** | **MODIFIERS** |
| Travelling Light | –1 WAR/Light Burden |
| Prepared | Medium Burden |
| Geared for War | +1 WAR/Heavy Burden |
| **SPECIALIZATION** | **MODIFIERS** |
| Sentinels | +1 VIGILANCE |
| Stalwarts | +1 RALLY |
| Experts | +1 EXPERTISE |

## Set The Eye Awareness Score

Even deep beneath the Misty Mountains, the Great Eye is ever-watchful, as servants and spies of the Shadow lurk in the dark of Moria.

Your base Eye Awareness will only change between missions when you gain **VALOUR** or wield a new Famous Weapon or Armour. Set the base score to 0, modified by the table below.

**BASE EYE AWARENESS**

| FACTOR | EYE AWARENESS MODIFIER |
|---|---|
| You are a Dwarf | +1 |
| You are an Elf or Dúnedain | +2 |
| You are a High Elf | +3 |
| You carry a Famous Weapon or Armour | +2 for each |
| You have a VALOUR of 4 or more | +1 |

A larger Band has more potential to stir the minions of Shadow within Moria, and notable items carried by a Hardened Ally (page XXX) can further draw the attention of the Enemy. Add to the Eye Awareness for this mission as shown in the table below .

**EYE AWARENESS MODIFIER**

| SIZE | EYE AWARENESS MODIFIER |
|---|---|
| Small Band (1–4) | +0 |
| Medium Band (5–8) | +2 |
| Large Band (9–12) | +4 |
| Famous Weapon or Armour carried by an Ally | +1 for each |

With those calculations complete, mark down your total starting Eye Awareness on the mission sheet.

## Set the Hunt Threshold

At the time of Balin's expedition, Sauron is awake and his spies and servants are on the hunt — even in the deepest places of the world. As noted on page XXX, Moria is considered a Dark Land. The default base Hunt threshold is set at 14.

However, if you successfully pushed back the influence of Shadow in a region of Moria in the course of your missions, you can mark that region as a Wild Land (with the Hunt threshold set at 16). Any such victories are undoubtedly short-lived, but may permit safer travel through Moria for a time. See page XXX for more information.

If you travel outside of Moria, use the table below to set your base Hunt threshold for the mission. If you move from one region to another in the course of your travels, adjust the Hunt threshold appropriately.

**BASE HUNT THRESHOLD**

| THE REGION TRAVERSED IS A... | HUNT THRESHOLD |
|---|---|
| Border Land | 18 |
| Wild Land | 16 |
| Dark Land | 14 |

The success or failure of your previous mission will influence the foothold that Shadow has gained. With failures and long recoveries, the Enemy may seek to exploit a perceived weakness. Likewise, with successes and pressing your advantage, you may send the servants of the Enemy scurrying into the darkness.

To integrate this larger struggle as a factor in your mission, adjust the starting Hunt threshold using the table below. If this is your first mission, you can skip this step. See page XXX to learn more about Fellowship Phase durations.

**HUNT THRESHOLD MODIFIERS**

| PREVIOUS MISSION | MODIFIERS |
|---|---|
| Your previous mission was an astounding success | +4 |
| Your previous mission was a qualified success | +0 |
| Your previous mission was a minor failure | −2 |
| Your previous mission was a devastating failure | −4 |

| FELLOWSHIP PHASE DURATION | MODIFIERS |
|---|---|
| Hurried (hours) | +2 |
| Brief (days) | +0 |
| Extended (weeks) | −2 |
| Yule (months) | −4 |

## Begin the Mission

Ready your gear, gather your comrades, and steel yourself for the perils ahead.

You will likely begin your mission with a journey as you set off from your Safe Haven along the dark paths of Moria. Jump to page XXX to learn about journeys in Moria, and page XXX for details on undertaking journeys within the solo campaign. For details on managing your Band and resolving challenges within Moria, turn to the next page.

# UNDERTAKING MISSIONS

This section contains guidelines for managing your Band and overcoming trials within the solo campaign.

## EXPLORING MORIA

Whether enduring a days-long journey through Moria or investigating a specific location, you can use the tools and descriptions provided in this book to help envision the experiences and dangers that await you and your Band.

As a solo player, you will often need to separate your knowledge as the player from the limited perspective of your Player-hero. For example, if a hidden pit is included in the description of a location, your Player-hero and their Band have no knowledge of that danger until they are tested against it. Use Skill rolls and Disposition rolls to learn how your Player-hero and their Band fare against the dangers and opportunities of Moria, not letting your knowledge as the player impact their chances.

But Moria is also a place of deep mysteries. You will be surprised by what you uncover — as both the player and Player-hero — using tools such as the chamber generator (page XXX), Telling and Lore tables (page XXX), and Journey events tables (page XXX).

## MAKING ROLLS

As a solo player, you must decide when rolls are necessary, a task that usually falls to the Loremaster. It might seem counter-intuitive to challenge your own success, but consider that each roll of the dice in *The One Ring* presents equal opportunity for triumph and despair.

Roll when risk is involved — when the possibility of failure affects the narrative. For further guidance, see "When to Roll" on page 16 of *The One Ring* core rules.

### TAKING THE LEAD

These rules often dictate whether you act as your Player-hero, or make a roll for the Band. For example, when you seek to inspire your Allies in a battle, it is your Player-hero's **ENHEARTEN** skill that will be tested. When the Band suffers a harmful event, make an Endurance Test using their **RALLY** Disposition.

Other times, you are left to decide who steps to the fore in an action — choosing between your Player-hero and one or more members of the Band. In these cases, pick whoever is most suited to the situation (or who would insist on taking the lead regardless).

### ROLLING FOR YOUR PLAYER-HERO

Make rolls for your Player-hero as normal, imagining your intent and resolving the outcome. If in doubt about the consequences of an action, look to tools such as the Telling Table (page XXX).

### ROLLING FOR THE BAND

When an Ally or your Band as a group faces a challenge, roll one Feat Die and a number of Success Dice equal to the most appropriate Disposition rating. Compare the result to their Readiness TN.

> The Readiness TN is 20 minus its current value, set when you plan the mission (page XXX).

If you are making the equivalent of a Skill roll for the Band, use whatever Disposition is most relevant to the Player-hero skill that would normally be rolled. For example, use **RALLY** in place of **ENHEARTEN**, **WAR** in place of **BATTLE**, and **MANOEUVRE** in place of **ATHLETICS**.

### USING GIFTS

When an Ally utilizes their Gift to lead an action, it adds a bonus to the roll. Gifts can be used when the Band acts together, or when the Gift's wielder acts independently.

> When an Ally's gift directly contributes to an action for the Band, or if an Ally is acting independently using their Gift, *gain (1d)* on the roll. A roll can only gain a bonus from a single Gift.

### CHRONICLING YOUR ADVENTURES

In *The Lord of the Rings*, we learn of the *Book of Mazarbul*, a record of Balin's doomed expedition, pulled from among the corpses piled in eternal vigil of the King of Moria's final resting place. Consider keeping your own chronicle of these events — the discoveries you make, the battles you fight, and the triumphs and woes you experience. Your own Book of Mazarbul might be brief, bulleted notes, more descriptive retellings of events, or even the personal journal entries of your Player-hero.

Using a Gift gives that Ally focus in your story — a chance to show their quality. But it can also put them in harm's way. Consider how the consequences of a failed roll might affect that Ally. In addition, a harrowing outcome or close call will rattle the Ally's confidence or capabilities, making the Gift ineffective.

If you roll an ᚢ when using a Gift, that Gift no longer provides bonuses during this mission. Mark an 'X' in the box next to the Gift's description on that Ally Card to indicate the Gift being unavailable.

During the Fellowship Phase (page XXX), you clear any marked boxes to regain the use of those Gifts.

### SELECTING A TARGET

In most cases, the target of a consequence is based on who initiated or led the action. However, actions for your Band might lead to consequences for your Player-hero, and vice-versa. Resolve these actions in the way that best fits the situation. If you're unsure if an outcome or event affects your Player-hero or an Ally, roll a Skill die: an odd result indicates your Band, and an even means your Player-hero.

When your Band is targeted by effects such as Wounds, the Ally who will face the consequence will often be obvious. If in doubt, roll a Feat Die and check the values shown on your Mission Worksheet, rolling again if needed. Or pick two Allies and let a Success Die choose between them using the process described above.

### DESPERATE STANDS

When a roll for the Band or Player-hero fails in a critical moment, there is a chance for an Ally to save the day — but at a potentially great cost.

To make a desperate stand following a failed roll, choose an Ally who will step into the fray. Then repeat the roll, making the new roll *Favoured* and Inspired. If you roll a ᚠ, the Ally survives. Otherwise, succeed or fail, the Ally is lost, having made the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of their fellows.

## ENDURANCE TESTS AND INJURIES

The consequences of physical hardships are tracked for your Band using Endurance Tests and Injury conditions.

### MAKING AN ENDURANCE TEST

Your Band of Allies does not track Endurance Points. Instead, when they are subjected to potential harm, you must make an Endurance Test. This test is likely to result in a fleeting injury, a minor setback that can lead to more serious injuries. But with some luck, they will emerge none the worse for wear.

Whenever the Band faces physical harm, make a **RALLY** roll. In a Battle (page XXX), the TN of this roll is modified by the might of the foe (TN + Might). Outside of a Battle, modify the roll by choosing an appropriate rank on the Damage Threat table. If in doubt, make it painful.

**DAMAGE THREAT**

| TYPE | MODIFIER |
|---|---|
| Bothersome | 0 |
| Painful | 1 |
| Vicious | 2 |
| Dreadful | 3 |

With success on the **RALLY** roll, your allies emerge unscathed. Their strength and fortitude have won out.

On a failure, a member of the Band suffers an Injury condition. Follow the guidelines below to determine the severity of the injury.

- If the Ally is currently uninjured, they suffer a *fleeting* injury.
- If the Ally is already injured, worsen the rank of their injury one step using the Injury Severity table; for example, from *fleeting* to *moderate*.

If the Endurance test fails with an ᚢ icon, you must instead do one of the following:

- Roll on the Injury Severity table to learn the nature of the damage (putting the fate of that Ally to chance).
- Apply an injury condition to two Allies (fleeting if uninjured, or one rank higher from the current injury).

**INJURY SEVERITY**

| FEAT DIE | CONDITION | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| ᚢ | Grievous Injury | The Ally is unconscious and Dying. If they survive, the grievous injury persists unless they receive First Aid during a Prolonged Rest. If they suffer another injury, they are dead. |
| 1–3 | Severe Injury | The injury can improve with successful First Aid during a Prolonged Rest. |
| 4–10 | Moderate Injury | The Ally recovers fully with a Prolonged Rest. |
| ᚠ | Fleeting injury | The Ally recovers fully with a short rest. |

**LINGERING INJURY:** If an Ally suffers a grievous injury and is given successful First Aid during a Prolonged Rest, their condition improves to a lingering injury. But this will haunt them for the remainder of the mission. If they suffer another grievous injury, they are dead.

*Severe*, *grievous*, and *lingering* injuries are serious conditions that count toward the Band becoming Weary.

### INFLICTING WOUNDS UPON YOUR ALLIES

Endurance tests are used for your Band in situations that would drain Endurance for a Player-hero. When your Band faces a Wound as a consequence, such as during a failed Journey Event, do not make an Endurance Test. Instead, the Wound is immediately applied as an Injury condition to an Ally. Roll on the Injury Severity table to learn its rank.

Similarly, whenever situations arise in your adventures that are certain to result in an injury to one or more Allies, simply apply that consequence. Pick a rank in the Injury Severity table, or roll for a random rank.

### DYING ALLIES

If an Ally suffers a grievous injury, they are incapacitated and Dying. As with a Player-hero, a Dying Ally must receive a successful **HEALING** (or EXPERTISE) roll within approximately 1 hour or they will die.

If the roll to give aid to a grievously injured Ally is a success, they are saved. But the injury remains a grievous one unless they receive additional First Aid during a Prolonged Rest.

If a grievously injured Ally suffers another injury, they are dead — another Dwarf joins the lost souls in the deep dark of Moria.

### RECOVERY AND FIRST AID

For the Player-hero, the recovery period for severe and grievous injuries is expressed in a number of days (as described on page 101 of *The One Ring* core rules). To simplify the tracking of injuries and recovery for your Band of Allies, use these guidelines.

- **FLEETING INJURY:** Mended with a short rest.
- **MODERATE INJURY:** Mended with a Prolonged Rest.

To treat an Ally's severe or grievous injury, make a **HEALING** (or **EXPERTISE**) roll during a Prolonged Rest. *Lose (1d)* if the injury is grievous. This is limited to one roll for each Prolonged Rest.

- **SEVERE INJURY:** With a successful First Aid roll during a Prolonged Rest, a severe injury improves to a moderate injury.
- **GRIEVOUS INJURY:** With a successful First Aid roll during a Prolonged Rest, a grievous injury improves to a lingering injury. The lingering injury will only mend with an extended rest during a Fellowship Phase. If an ally faces another grievous injury while suffering a lingering injury, they are dead with no recourse.

Once at a Safe Haven, any still-injured Allies recover as detailed in the Fellowship Phase guidelines on page XXX.

## Fatigue Tests and Fatigue Conditions

The Player-hero and the Band both suffer Fatigue points during Journeys as defined by the Journey Events table (page XXX). For the solo Player-hero, this fatigue is managed as normal — it accumulates over time, raising your total Load and making it easier for your character to become Weary.

Your Allies do not track accumulated Fatigue points. Instead, whenever Fatigue is gained as a result of a Journey Event, make a Fatigue Test to see how deeply the effects of the journey weigh upon them.

> Whenever the Band gains Fatigue points, make a **RALLY** roll. The TN of this roll is modified by the number of Fatigue Points gained during the Journey Event (TN + Fatigue). The Band's current Burden can aid or hamper their efforts on this roll as shown on the Burden Modifier table.

**BURDEN MODIFIER**

| BURDEN | BONUS/PENALTY |
|---|---|
| Light | *Gain (1d)* |
| Medium | – |
| Heavy | *Lose (1d)* |
| Overburdened | *Lose (2d)* |

With a success on the **RALLY** roll, your allies bear the hardship of the journey without noticeable ill-effects. The prolonged efforts of delving into the heart of Moria will surely carry a cost in the long run, but for now, they are holding up.

On a failure, a member of the Band suffers a Fatigue condition. Follow the guidelines below to determine the severity of the fatigue.

- If the Ally is not currently fatigued, mark that box on the Mission Worksheet.
- If the Ally is already suffering the effects of fatigue, worsen the rank one step using the Fatigue Conditions table. For example, shifting their condition from fatigued to faltering.

If the Fatigue test fails with an eye icon, you must instead do one of the following:

- Set an unaffected Ally's condition to faltering (skipping over fatigued).
- Shift an already-affected Ally's condition up two ranks (for example, from fatigued to spent).
- Apply a fatigue condition to two Allies (fatigued if unaffected, or one rank higher from their current condition).

**FATIGUE CONDITIONS**

| RANK | EFFECT |
|---|---|
| Fatigued | – |
| Faltering | – |
| Spent | – |
| Collapsed | The Ally is incapacitated |

Spent and collapsed are serious conditions and count toward the Band becoming Weary.

### RECOVERING FROM FATIGUE CONDITIONS

A collapsed Ally improves to the spent condition with a Prolonged Rest — enough to get them back on their feet. Fatigued, faltering, and spent Allies only improve during Prolonged Rests in a sheltered and safe refuge. Within Moria, this is generally your Safe Haven as part of your Fellowship Phase (page XXX).

## Adjusting Burden

Your Band's Burden is tracked through four levels: light, medium, heavy, and overburdened. When you set off on a mission, the current Burden reflects your choice of gear — if your Band is outfitted for war or speed. Heavy Burden (or greater) inflicts a penalty on your Fatigue tests.

Through the course of your adventure, you may have cause to adjust your Burden. Anytime your Band must take on significant new weight, worsen the rank of their Burden by one step. If you abandon significant weight, improve the rank.

If you set off on the mission geared for war, and abandon your heavy armour and weapons to lighten your Burden, you must also remove the bonus that was applied to their WAR rank. In addition, leaving behind precious Dwarf-forged war gear for Orcs to wield against you is likely to weigh heavily upon you and your Band in another fashion, causing you to gain Shadow points.

## Becoming Weary

Keep a running tally of losses and hardships among your Band from the list below. If at least half the Allies on this mission (rounding up) are lost or suffering from a serious condition, the Band is Weary.

- **OUT OF ACTION:** Missing, fled, abandoned, or killed
- **SERIOUS INJURY CONDITIONS:** Severe, grievous, or lingering
- **SERIOUS FATIGUE CONDITIONS:** Spent or collapsed

A Weary band suffers the same penalty when taking action as a Weary Player-hero.

> When making a roll for a Weary Band, all the Success Dice that come up showing a result in an outlined number (1, 2, or 3) are considered to have given a result of zero instead.

## Managing Hope

You and your Band share the same pool of Hope points. Hope is spent as normal to grant a bonus on any die roll.

## Suffering Shadow

The effects of Shadow are managed for you and your Band as a group, and you share a pool of Shadow points. These Shadow Points are accumulated, tested, and reduced as described starting on page 136 of *The One Ring* core rules, with the following considerations for leading a Band.

### THE WEIGHT OF LOSSES

Injuries or deaths among your fellows weigh heavily on you and your Band.

> When an Ally suffers a Severe Injury or Grievous Injury, gain 1 Shadow Point (Dread). If an Ally is killed, lost, or left behind, gain 2 Shadow Points (Dread).

### SHADOW TESTS

You can attempt to cancel or reduce the amount of Shadow Points gained by you and your Band through a Shadow Test.

As the leader, you have the most influence in pushing back the effects of Shadow. Resolve the Shadow Test as normal using either **VALOUR** (for Dread) or **WISDOM** (for Greed or Sorcery).

### BECOMING MISERABLE

The misery of Shadow weighs upon you all. If your Shadow score equals or exceeds the current Hope rating, you and your Band are now Miserable. All rolls that show an Eye on the Feat die automatically fail.

If you are struggling under the weight of Shadow, you can accept a Shadow scar as described on page 137 of *The One Ring* core rules.

### BOUTS OF MADNESS

If your Shadow Score reaches your maximum Hope, you and your Band are *Ill-favoured* on all rolls. You can only get rid of this accumulated Shadow by playing out a bout of madness.

> A bout of madness affects the Player-hero or one Ally, chosen or randomly selected by the Player.

The bout of madness will undoubtedly cause trouble among the Band. It also has farther-reaching implications as you and the Band advance along your Shadow Path and develop a new Flaw.

Flaws apply to you and the Band as a whole but can manifest within an individual. When a Flaw is gained, make note of it. If a situation in your story triggers a Flaw (ask the Telling table on page XXX if unsure), consider how this creates conflicts among the Band and tests your leadership. In addition, a Flaw can cause related rolls to be *Ill-favoured* as described on page 141 of *The One Ring* core rules.

### SUCCUMBING TO SHADOW

If you or your Band advance to the end of your Shadow Path, the fellowship is broken. Your quest to aid Balin and reclaim Khazad-dûm is over.

## MANAGING EYE AWARENESS

### INCREASING EYE AWARENESS

Use the guidelines for increasing Eye Awareness as detailed starting on page 170 of *The One Ring* core rules.

In addition, making noise within Moria can increase Eye Awareness as described on page XXX.

Also, an Eye result on the Ill-Fortune Table (page XXX) will raise the Eye Awareness Score by 2. This is in addition to the increase from the initial Eye result which triggered a roll on that table. The Eye is fixed upon you!

### REVELATION EPISODES

When your Eye Awareness matches or exceeds the current Hunt threshold, you must face a Revelation episode.

Imagine a threat that best represents the current situation, or roll on the table below to select from the Moria Revelation Episode tables starting on page XXX. If you set a Revelation episode in motion outside the perception of your Player-hero, make note of it and consider how it may later reveal itself.

#### PUSHING BACK THE DARK

By default, Moria is considered a Dark Land for the purposes of setting the Hunt threshold (see page XXX) and for rolling Journey events. However, if your efforts to reclaim an area or mitigate the influence of Shadow are successful, you may set the affected region to a Wild Land.

If unsure of the effects of your efforts, or whether a reclaimed area has since been overrun, use the Telling Table. Ask: "Is this area a Wild Land?" If "no," make it a Dark Land.

#### REVELATION EPISODE TRIGGER

| SUCCESS DIE | TABLE |
|---|---|
| 1–3 | Dire Portents (page XXX) |
| 4–5 | Orc Assault (page XXX) |
| 6 | Terrors of the Dark (page XXX) |

## RECLAIMING TREASURES

Uncountable treasures lie in the darkness of Moria. Some relics and treasure hoards are hidden or lost. Others have been seized and are in the clutches of Orcs, Goblins, and other vile denizens.

If a mission sends you to recover a fabled treasure, or you uncover a treasure over the course of your adventures, you can claim that prize and return with it to your Safe Haven.

Use the process described starting on page 158 of *The One Ring* rulebook to reveal the contents and value of a treasure hoard. If unsure of the size of a hoard, roll on the table below.

#### HOARD RATING

| SUCCESS DIE | RATING |
|---|---|
| 1–3 | Lesser |
| 4–5 | Greater |
| 6 | Marvellous |

When generating treasure points for a hoard, roll only for your Player-hero. This is your portion of the treasure, with the rest to be shared among the Band and to fund the

reclamation of Khazad-dûm. If you decide a special item is predestined for a member of your Band, you can award it to them as described on page XXX.

More importantly, reclaiming a notable treasure builds your reputation in the eyes of your kin, represented as an Experience point milestone (page XXX).

### YOUR TREASURE INDEX

As detailed starting on page 160 of *The One Ring* rulebook, you can create your own index of treasures or download sample indexes. As both player and Loremaster, you can customize an index to the interests of your character and the level of magic you desire in your campaign. If you want to leave a discovery in the hands of fate, assign Feat die values to each item in your index and treat it as a random table you can roll on.

No matter your approach, work to ensure that magical objects are truly unique and wondrous — a rare find that can turn the tide of your campaign.

### THE BURDEN OF RICHES

You must consider the difficulty of carrying treasure back to your Safe Haven. A haul can increase your Band's Burden (page XXX), or it might be impractical to carry any significant hoard without the benefit of wagons and pack animals. Better to grab the truly remarkable items, hoping what remains will someday find its way back to Dwarven vaults.

# SOLO TOOLS

Without the guidance of a Loremaster, the solo player has only themselves to help build the story. The tools contained herein help shoulder this burden.

- **THE TELLING TABLE** (page XXX) helps answer simple questions about locations, people, creatures, and events. Use this table when you would normally ask the Loremaster a yes/no question.
- **THE LORE TABLE** (page XXX) helps inspire answers to open-ended questions, as well as revealing new events and situations.
- **THE FORTUNE** and **ILL-FORTUNE TABLES** (page XXX) offer prompts for narrative outcomes when a ᚠ rune or 👁 icon is rolled on your Feat Die.
- **SPECIAL SUCCESS TABLE** (page XXX): Includes benefits of a superior result for solo play
- **MILESTONES** (page XXX): Guidelines for awarding Experience and Fellowship points to your Player-hero.

## The Telling Table

One of the most useful and versatile tools at a solo player's disposal is the Telling table. Use the Telling table when posing questions answerable by "yes" or "no." This table helps resolve questions normally answered by a Loremaster, revealing details of the world and the intent or actions of other characters.

To use the Telling table:

- Ask your question, with "yes" being the positive outcome (from the perspective of your Player-hero).
- Set the chance of a "yes" (with "middling" as the default).
- Roll one Feat die and consult the Telling table for your answer.

Note also that rolling either the ᚠ rune or 👁 icon results in an automatic yes or no, respectively, with an extreme result or twist.

**TELLING TABLE**

| CHANCE | ROLL A FEAT DIE. THE ANSWER IS *YES* IF YOU ROLL... |
|---|---|
| Certain | 1 or greater |
| Likely | 4 or greater |
| Middling | 6 or greater |
| Doubtful | 8 or greater |
| Unthinkable | 10 |
| ᚠ: Always yes, with an extreme result or twist | |
| 👁: Always no, with an extreme result or twist | |

*For example, your Player-hero casts their torch against a stone fresco draped with cobwebs, seeking familiar icons or figures in the scene depicted. You ask "Do I recognize anything in this fresco?" You set the chance to "doubtful" and roll.*

*You roll a ᚠ, which according to the Telling table is "always yes, with an extreme result or twist." You determine, perhaps with help from the Lore Table (page XXX), that your Player-hero does in fact recognize something in the fresco: the well-worn symbol of a great Dwarven house, members of which now accompany Balin in this very quest. Perhaps they would know more!*

### TRUST YOUR GUT

You needn't roll on the Telling table each time you ask a question. Oftentimes, the answer will be obvious to you, based on the narrative thus far and the context of the question. The Telling table is a tool for when you earnestly don't know, when you can't decide, or when the possibilities of each present equal opportunities for fun.

## The Lore Table

Use the Lore table to help reveal details when asking an open-ended question about a situation or event. The table includes four columns: Action, Aspect, Focus, and Feature. You can roll on one column for a single word prompt, or two or more to construct a prompt phrase.

To roll on the table, use one Feat die to determine the section, and one Success die for the row.

The Lore table can answer questions such as:

- "What is this Dwarf's nature?" (Aspect)
- "What mission does Balin have for me?" (Action, Aspect, Focus)
- "What is the subject of this mural?" (Aspect, Focus)
- "What do I find in the next chamber?" (Aspect, Feature)
- "What are some details of the room where we take our rest?" (Feature, Feature)

Depending on the situation, the result might be taken literally, or interpreted as an abstraction. Part of the fun of solo roleplaying is deciding how these enigmatic riddles relate to your current situation. If a result doesn't fit or is hard to apply to the current situation, roll again or check adjacent rows for your answer.

*For example, your Player-hero speaks with an Ally and learns more of their background. Rolling on the Lore table to determine the nature of the discovery, you roll an Aspect of "Broken" and a Focus of "Folk." You decide that the Ally originates from an ancient Dwarven house, once-great but broken long-ago by war and calamity. This Ally has a lot to prove, it seems.*

### FEAT DIE: ᚠ

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Believe | Alluring | Courage | Artefact |
| 2 | Bolster | Cheery | Duty | Artwork |
| 3 | Defend | Gentle | Fellowship | Illumination |
| 4 | Forgive | Good | Hope | Plants |
| 5 | Resist | Kind | Love | Shelter |
| 6 | Strengthen | Wondrous | Peace | Treasure |

### FEAT DIE: 👁

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Abandon | Corrupted | Curse | Darkness |
| 2 | Attack | Cruel | Despair | Ruin |
| 3 | Betray | Deceptive | Enemy | Blood |
| 4 | Corrupt | Fell | Fear | Bones |
| 5 | Defeat | Despoiled | Shadow | Corpse |
| 6 | Weaken | Treacherous | War | Trap |

### FEAT DIE: 1

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Aid | Abandoned | Ally | Archive |
| 2 | Ambush | Adorned | Border | Armament |
| 3 | Arrive | Ancient | Burden | Barricade |
| 4 | Await | Blocked | Community | Battlefield |
| 5 | Breach | Bold | Council | Bridge |
| 6 | Break | Broken | Court | Cave-in |

### FEAT DIE: 2

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Capture | Cheerless | Death | Chill |
| 2 | Change | Colossal | Decay | Container |
| 3 | Chase | Concealed | Defence | Creature |
| 4 | Command | Dangerous | Doubt | Dead-end |
| 5 | Control | Dead | Dream | Debris |
| 6 | Craft | Defended | Fate | Doorway |

### FEAT DIE: 3

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Defy | Destroyed | Folk | Dust |
| 2 | Deliver | Dreadful | Followers | Echoes |
| 3 | Demand | Fierce | Fortune | Encampment |
| 4 | Discover | Flourishing | Greed | Enchantment |
| 5 | Disguise | Foreboding | Haven | Excavation |
| 6 | Endure | Forgotten | Health | Fire |

### FEAT DIE: 4

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Escape | Forsaken | History | Fissure |
| 2 | Evade | Fragile | Honour | Fortification |
| 3 | Explore | Ghastly | Ill-Fortune | Gate |
| 4 | Fortify | Gloomy | Journey | Ghost |
| 5 | Gather | Grand | Kin | Heat |
| 6 | Guard | Haunted | Knowledge | Heights |

### FEAT DIE: 5

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Guide | Hidden | Land | Hideaway |
| 2 | Hide | Impenetrable | Leader | Illusion |
| 3 | Hinder | Imposing | Legend | Inscription |
| 4 | Hoard | Inspiring | Life | Lair |
| 5 | Hold | Isolated | Memory | Machinery |
| 6 | Hunt | Lost | Message | Mist |

### FEAT DIE: 6

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Lead | Menacing | Gift | Monument |
| 2 | Learn | Mighty | Nature | Nest |
| 3 | Leave | Mysterious | Pain | Opening |
| 4 | Lose | Noble | Patron | Person |
| 5 | Mourn | Old | Peril | Pillar |
| 6 | Move | Ominous | Plan | Pit |

### FEAT DIE: 7

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Persist | Open | Power | Provisions |
| 2 | Preserve | Peaceful | Prophecy | Puzzle |
| 3 | Prevent | Precious | Quest | Rubbish |
| 4 | Reclaim | Restored | Refuge | Runes |
| 5 | Reject | Rugged | Riddle | Scratches |
| 6 | Remove | Secretive | Rumour | Silence |

### FEAT DIE: 8

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Replenish | Simple | Secret | Smoke |
| 2 | Restore | Small | Skill | Sound |
| 3 | Scheme | Stout | Song | Stairs |
| 4 | Search | Stricken | Story | Stench |
| 5 | Seize | Stubborn | Strength | Stone |
| 6 | Share | Swift | Survival | Tomb |

### FEAT DIE: 9

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Slay | Towering | Threat | Tool |
| 2 | Steal | Tricky | Time | Trail |
| 3 | Summon | Twisted | Trust | Vault |
| 4 | Surrender | Unfathomable | Truth | Viewpoint |
| 5 | Surround | Unnatural | Vengeance | Vision |
| 6 | Threaten | Unstable | Wealth | Voice |

### FEAT DIE: 10

| SUCCESS DIE | ACTION | ASPECT | FOCUS | FEATURE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Transform | Veiled | Weapon | Wall |
| 2 | Travel | Vigorous | Wish | Warren |
| 3 | Trick | Weary | Wound | Water |
| 4 | Uncover | Wild | Safety | Whispers |
| 5 | Uphold | Wretched | Scar | Wind |
| 6 | Withstand | Young | Magic | Wood |

## FORTUNE AND ILL-FORTUNE TABLES

When you are taking action, and want to give the challenge additional focus in a dramatic moment, use a result that includes the Gandalf Rune ᚠ or Eye of Sauron icon 👁 to represent circumstances and events beyond the control of your Player-hero.

- Rolling the ᚠ rune means a successful action was bolstered by fortune, such as unexpected aid, advantageous terrain, or a foe's folly. To help inspire a random result, roll on the Fortune table.
- Rolling a failure with the 👁 icon means a failure was complicated by ill-fortune, such as a broken weapon, difficult terrain, or enemy reinforcements. To help inspire a random result, roll on the Ill-Fortune table.

Many situations in these solo rules or in *The One Ring* core rules will have a predefined result for an 👁 or ᚠ. These tables are not meant to combine with those results. Use them in dramatic moments when your fortunes and ill-fortunes are open to interpretation.

### FORTUNE

| FEAT DIE | RESULT |
|---|---|
| 👁 | The Eye of the Enemy focuses elsewhere. Decrease Eye Awareness by 1. |
| 1 | You may bypass a threat without attracting notice |
| 2 | You gain favour with an Ally |
| 3 | An enemy inadvertently reveals their position |
| 4 | You gain favoured ground |
| 5 | Enemies run afoul of danger |
| 6 | You locate or learn of a useful item |
| 7 | Your success instils new hope or renewed resolve |
| 8 | You find a moment of comfort or safety |
| 9 | You learn or realize something which gives helpful insight into your mission |
| 10 | You encounter an opportunity suited to your nature or abilities |
| ᚠ | An Ally reveals an unexpected strength or skill |

### ILL-FORTUNE

| FEAT DIE | RESULT |
|---|---|
| 👁 | Your actions catch the Eye of the Enemy. Increase Eye Awareness by 2. |
| 1 | You draw unwanted attention |
| 2 | Your actions are observed by someone of ill-intent |
| 3 | Unexpected enemies emerge or are sighted |
| 4 | You are hindered by difficult terrain or an unfavourable environment |
| 5 | You find yourself ill-equipped for the circumstances |
| 6 | A favoured weapon or item is lost, broken, or sacrificed |
| 7 | You are plagued by troubling visions or thoughts |
| 8 | An old injury or stress resurfaces |
| 9 | You learn or realize something which adds a new complication to your mission |
| 10 | You face a test which is contrary to your nature or abilities |
| ᚠ | An Ally becomes a hindrance or liability |

## Special Success Table

When a successful action also produces one or more Elvish symbols ᛉ on your Success dice, this is a superior result (see page XXX of *The One Ring* core rules). Unlike the whims of fortune and ill-fortune indicated by a ᚠ rune or 👁 icon on the Feat dice, this outcome can be interpreted as a direct result of preparedness and skills.

You can specify what your superior result means by 'spending' your rolled icons to trigger a number of special results using the Special Success table. The table from page 19 of *The One Ring* core rules is duplicated below for ease of reference. Choose one of the options listed for each ᛉ rolled.

The 'Cancel a Failure' option is only relevant for co-op play with another Player-hero.

This table is not used in situations where the benefit of a superior result is already described, such as when making a Clash roll in a Battle (page XXX), or when using a Cultural Virtue that provides specific benefits for ᛉ icons. If a result for a ᛉ is already detailed by other rules or a character ability, use that instead of the Special Success table.

**SKILL SPECIAL SUCCESS**

| SPEND 1 SUCCESS ICON TO... | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|
| Cancel a Failure | If a Skill roll involves multiple players, you help another Player-hero who failed; the failed roll is considered a success. |
| Score 1 Additional Success | If an action requires multiple successes to be achieved, you score 1 additional success. |
| Gain Insight | You gain additional information, not necessarily related to the task at hand. For example, while helping a sick individual with a HEALING roll you discover the trace of poison. Or you spot a sentry while sneaking into a ruin with a roll of STEALTH. |
| Go quietly | You achieve your goal noiselessly or without otherwise attracting attention. |
| Make haste | You complete the attempted task in a shorter time (about half the expected time). |
| Widen Influence | You can influence more than the specific number of subjects originally targeted by the action. As a general rule, each Success icon spent corresponds to one additional subject or group of subjects. For example, following a roll of INSIGHT, you spot a second person acting suspiciously at an inn; a roll of ENHEARTEN aimed to affect half a dozen individuals allows you to influence a full dozen. |

## Milestones

In *The One Ring*, Experience point rewards and Fellowship point refreshes are earned at the end of your gameplay sessions. If this works for the format of your solo campaign sessions, there's no need to adjust. But one advantage of solo gaming is flexibility — your sessions might last for a few minutes or a few hours, which can make session-based rewards disconnected from events and achievements in your story.

If you prefer to earn these rewards untethered from the structure of specific sessions, you can instead mark the growth of your character and the bolstering of your fellowship through Milestones.

### Experience Milestones

Experience milestones are key events, experiences, and accomplishments for your hero. When you achieve am experience milestone shown in the table below, gain the listed amount of Skill points or Adventure points. Experience points are spent on training and growth during the Fellowship Phase (see page 119 of *The One Ring* core rules).

**EXPERIENCE MILESTONES**

| MILESTONE | REWARD |
|---|---|
| Achieve a mission or quest | 2 Adventure Points and 2 Skill Points |
| Achieve a notable personal goal | 1 Adventure Point and 1 Skill Point |
| Retrieve a notable treasure | 1 Adventure Point and 1 Skill Point |
| Reach or reveal a significant location | 1 Adventure Point |
| Survive a dangerous battle | 1 Adventure Point |
| Face a Revelation Episode | 1 Adventure Point |
| Defeat a notable foe | 1 Skill Point |
| Overcome a tricky obstacle | 1 Skill Point |
| Face a Noteworthy Encounter during a journey | 1 Skill point |

If more than one milestone applies to a scene or challenge, select only one. For example, if you defeat a band of Orcs as part of a Noteworthy Encounter, you could take the milestone from either a Noteworthy Encounter or Survive a dangerous battle, but not both.

### FELLOWSHIP MILESTONES

Your Fellowship points represent the shared bonds of your Player-hero, your Band, the community of Dwarves among Balin's expedition — and your connection to other folk of Middle-earth.

In group play, your Fellowship points fully refresh at the end of every session. For unstructured solo play, you can instead trigger a refresh when you achieve a Fellowship milestone. This can include an important experience shared with others, a significant moment of personal interaction, or a demonstration of loyalty or sacrifice. Some suggestions:

- Participate in a Council
- Put yourself at risk for the sake of another character
- Prove your loyalty to another character
- Deepen your understanding of another character
- Take part in a friendly encounter
- Share the experience of looking upon a wonder of Middle-earth
- Partake in communal songs or stories
- Celebrate a great victory
- Memorialize a tragic loss

In short, any meaningful moment with others is an opportunity to strengthen your kinship and refresh your Fellowship points. If your Fellowship pool is exhausted in the midst of a mission, give a member of your Band some focus, taking the time as both player and character to learn more about them.

Make these scenes relatively rare and give them due attention. A milestone about every two hours of play is about right.

# BATTLES

What prowls the darkness beyond the Bridge of Khazad-dûm? For many centuries, the glorious kingdom of Durin the Deathless has been host to Goblins, Trolls, and viler things still. You and your Band will undoubtedly encounter these foes in your journeys through the long dark — and in those times, trust the comrades at your shoulder as you do the steel in your hand.

This section offers rules for leading your Band in pitched Battles against the denizens of Moria. These alternatives to the standard *The One Ring* combat rules help speed up play for a solo player, support larger-scale conflicts, and put the focus on the exploits of you and your Band.

## ASPECTS OF A BATTLE

### CLASHES

A Battle is organized into rounds of Clashes. Each Clash encompasses a chaotic frenzy of attacks, manoeuvres, and parries among your Allies and enemies.

The heart of each Clash, the point at which you might turn the tide or face grievous setbacks, is the Clash roll. This roll resolves the efforts of you and your Band for that round against the attacks and defences of your enemies. The Clash sequence and Clash roll are described starting on page XXX.

### OBJECTIVES

When battling enemies in the darkness of Moria, the Band may find itself fighting on multiple fronts or holding off enemies while struggling to complete a task. Those risky tasks are Battle objectives.

An objective might be a heavy door that must be forced open, a wall that must be scaled, a prisoner to be rescued, or an item that must be recovered.

Objectives can represent your ultimate goal in this Battle — the reason you set yourself against these foes — or an opportunity or obstacle that arises in the midst of the fight. If an Ally is grievously injured and falls in the midst of the battlefield, getting them out of harm's way becomes a new objective. If you find a Battle turning against you and seek to withdraw, then escape becomes your sole objective.

> Battle objectives are given a resistance: 3 (simple), 6 (laborious), 9 (daunting), or 12 (overwhelming). Successes gained in the Clash roll can be applied to reducing this resistance. When an objective's resistance falls to zero, you and the Band have achieved that goal.

Some objectives serve as obstacles that must be overcome before you can reasonably engage your foes. For example, crossing a wide bridge to engage an entrenched group of archers. If an obstacle stands in your way, make it an objective and do not apply successes to any other endeavour until the objective is overcome by reducing its resistance to zero.

On the other hand, if nothing prevents you from taking an objective — such as when you entirely defeat the foes who stood in the way — that objective is automatically claimed.

### ADVANTAGES

Advantages provide your Band with an edge in the fight. You can gain an advantage at the start of the battle by successfully positioning your Band, and secure new advantages in the midst of the fight by outmanoeuvring the enemy.

Each advantage allows you to *gain (1d)* on the Clash roll.

Advantages are either temporary or persistent. A temporary advantage is used only once. A persistent advantage remains for as long as the Band is successful on their Clash roll — if they fail that roll, any advantages are lost.

When you gain an advantage, make note of it and give it a descriptive name, such as *High Ground* or *Shaken Foes*.

### COMPLICATIONS

Complications are advantages gained by your foes or inherent aspects of the battlefield that do not favour your Band.

Each complication causes you to *lose (1d)* on the Clash roll.

As with advantages, complications are either temporary or persistent. A temporary complication affects your Band's next Clash roll. A persistent complication lasts from one Clash to the next — it is only undone when you spend a success from the Clash roll to overcome that complication.

When you suffer a complication, make note of it and give it a descriptive name, such as *Broken Ranks* or *Toppled Pillar*.

## ENCOUNTERING FEARSOME FOES

Myriad creatures prowl the long dark, fiercely protecting their borders from all who dare tread their territory. Balin's expedition has alerted many such foes to the renewed Dwarven presence in Moria — some hunt the Dwarves with a vile hunger, while others slink deeper into the dark, lying in ambush.

### WAR PARTIES

A War Party is a group of foes, denizens of Moria ranging from patrols of Goblin scouts to hordes of Orcs, barbarous Trolls, and viler enemies still.

These enemy groups use simplified characteristics to speed play and allow for large-scale fights. They have only two stats in a Battle: Might and Resistance. The usual characteristics, Combat proficiencies, and Fell Abilities of your adversaries are entirely abstracted within these simpler stats.

- **MIGHT:** Represents the overall power and combat prowess of the War Party
- **RESISTANCE:** Represent the numbers and fortitude of the War Party

The War Party Stats table provides the Might and Resistance for various scales of a War Party. You can quickly set the stats for your foes by choosing a scale. If you aren't sure, roll a Feat Die on this table to randomly determine their scale.

If you lead a large Band, you are likely to draw the attention of larger and more powerful forces, making a roll on the War Party Stats table *Ill-favoured*. If you lead a small Band, make it *Favoured*.

Adjust the stats as appropriate to how you imagine your foes. For example, if it is a large force of undisciplined foes, consider giving them the Resistance of a Warband to represent their numbers, but the Might of a pack to represent their relative lack of fighting prowess and power.

#### WAR PARTY STATS

| FEAT DIE | SCALE | MIGHT | RESISTANCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Horde | 3 | 12 |
| 1–4 | Warband | 2 | 9 |
| 5–10 | Pack | 1 | 6 |
| | Patrol | 0 | 3 |

### ARCHFOES

An Archfoe is a powerful enemy combatant or commander accompanying a War Party, such as an Orc-chieftain leading a warband, or a Cave-troll set loose by its handlers. The presence of an Archfoe bolsters the forces of darkness and harries the Band's efforts to claim victory.

An Archfoe adds to a War Party's Might and Resistance, according to the table below. In addition, the presence of an Archfoe in the Battle causes you to *lose (1d)* on each of the Clash rolls.

To randomly determine the presence of an Archfoe, roll a Skill die on this table.

### ARCHFOE MODIFIERS

| SUCCESS DIE | ARCHFOE | MIGHT | RESISTANCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1–3 | No Archfoe | – | – |
| 4–5 | Lesser Archfoe | (+0) | (+1) |
| 6 | Greater Archfoe | (+1) | (+3) |
| When an Archfoe is present, *lose (1d)* on Clash rolls. | | | |

The effects of an Archfoe persist until the Band achieves victory in the overall battle, or when the Archfoe is defeated in a direct confrontation with your Player-hero.

If an Archfoe is present, choose an appropriate Adversary from the descriptions in the core rules or other *The One Ring* supplements. If your Player-hero faces an Archfoe head-on, you will play out the fight with the standard *The One Ring* combat rules using the adversary's full characteristics. See page XXX for details.

## Beginning the Battle

Now that the enemy forces are arrayed against your Band, it's time to set the Battle in motion.

### SET YOUR OBJECTIVE

If you and your Band are seeking some goal in this Battle — other than simply defeating your foes — make that goal an objective and give it a resistance from the table below.

### BATTLE OBJECTIVE

| OBJECTIVE RATING | RESISTANCE |
|---|---|
| Simple | 3 |
| Laborious | 6 |
| Daunting | 9 |
| Overwhelming | 12 |

If this Battle is straightforward, one force clashing with another, don't give it an objective — although one might arise in the course of the battle. On the other hand, if you are seeking to simply flee the Battle, unwilling to risk the lives of your Allies, then escape is your objective.

### VISUALIZE THE FIELD OF BATTLE

To set your opportunities and challenges in this battle, envision one or more broad characteristics of the battlefield. For inspiration, roll on the Battlefield Aspect table (below) or use the Chamber Generator (page XXX).

Make note of any advantages or complications that come into play due to aspects of the battlefield or the nature of the encounter.

### BATTLEFIELD ASPECT

| FEAT DIE | FEATURES |
|---|---|
|  | Barbed and wicked fortifications |
| 1 | Cramped passages and chambers |
| 2 | Paths leading to high ground |
| 3 | Expansive hall with soaring pillars |
| 4 | Fissured or fractured terrain |
| 5 | Concealing smoke or steam |
| 6 | Bridge over a chasm or pit |
| 7 | Running rivers |
| 8 | Improvised barricades |
| 9 | Endless stairs |
| 10 | Mine shafts and heavy equipment |
|  | Sun-lit space |

### GET IN POSITION

As the Battle is joined, decide if you successfully array your forces for the start of the fight, or are outmanoeuvred by your enemies.

First, consider what triggered the Battle. Was your Band surprised, having failed a roll such as **VIGILANCE** to catch sight of lurking foes? Did you successfully set up an ambush by **MANOEUVRING** stealthily into position, or use your Band's **EXPERTISE** to prepare fortifications? Make the roll *Favoured* or *Ill-favoured* if one side has a clear advantage.

> Make a **BATTLE** roll to ready your Band for the fight. If your Band is caught unprepared, make it *Ill-favoured*. If you are forewarned and in a strong position, make it *Favoured*.

If the roll succeeds, *gain (1d)* as a temporary advantage (*upper hand*) on your first Clash roll, or a persistent advantage with a . If it fails, *lose (1d)* on that roll as a temporary complication (*caught off guard*). On a failure with an , it is a persistent complication.

## Clash Sequence

To represent the combined efforts of you and your Band, and the actions of your enemy, Battles are organized into rounds of Clashes. A Clash encompasses a chaotic frenzy of attacks, manoeuvres, and defences.

Each Clash is resolved through the following steps.

1. Select Your Leader Focus
2. Set the Band's stance
3. Make a Clash roll
4. Resolve the Clash

### 1 SELECT YOUR LEADER FOCUS

Choose a single action for your Player-hero from the options below. This is your focus for the Clash.

If playing co-op (adventuring with another Player-hero) only one player chooses a leader focus for each Clash. The other manages the Band's stance and Clash roll. These roles may swap from one Clash to the next.

Note: Advantages and complications for the Battle do not modify your leader focus rolls — only the Clash roll.

**COMMAND:** You lead your allies, seize tactical advantages, and overcome complications.

- Roll **BATTLE**
- If successful, you *gain (1d)* on this Clash roll, plus 1d for every success icon.
- If the roll fails, suffer a temporary complication: *Chaos in the Ranks*.

**INSPIRE:** You bolster your Allies with rousing words and inspiring actions.

- Roll **ENHEARTEN**
- If successful, the Band is Inspired until you next fail a Clash roll.
- With one or more success icons, the Band also ignores Weary and Miserable effects until you next fail a Clash roll.
- If the roll fails, gain 1 Shadow point.

**FIGHT:** You lose yourself in the chaos of the Battle.

- Roll an appropriate Combat Proficiency for an equipped weapon, modified by the enemy group's Might
- If successful, reduce the foe's Resistance by 1 point.
- With one or more success icons, also create an opening or opportunity for your Band and *gain (1d)* on this Clash roll.
- If the roll fails, roll two Skill dice, add them together, and decrease your Player-hero's Endurance by that amount.

**DUEL:** You face off against an Archfoe.

- Your attention is focused on that fight. See page XXX for details.

### 2 SET THE BAND'S STANCE

Decide the tactics for your Band for this Clash, choosing from the options below.

**AGGRESSIVE:** The Band presses their advantages and assails their foes, heedless of defence.

- The Clash roll is *Ill-favoured*.
- When making the Clash roll, immediately reduce the Resistance of a foe or objective by 1 point — no matter the outcome.

**BALANCED:** The Band fights with careful tactics, giving due attention to both attack and defence.

- No effect.

**GUARDED:** The band falls back or forms a defensive line, focused on the safety of their fellows.

- The Clash roll is *Favoured*.
- Success icons on the Clash roll are ignored.

**FLEEING:** The Band's only intent is to retreat from this fight.

- Make the Clash roll using **MANOEUVRE** (instead of **WAR**).
- Success icons on the Clash roll are ignored, except when applied to an objective to escape the battle.

### 3 MAKE A CLASH ROLL

Rather than using multiple rolls for the actions of your Allies and enemies, you make a single Clash roll each round. This roll represents the efforts of your Band — supported by you — against the strength of your foes. It is the summation of many mighty blows, desperate parries, and whistling arrows. Imagine the Clash as a frenetic, dramatic scene, with your choices influencing the focus of the action.

Before rolling, consider your intent for this phase of the fight, and what strategies and manoeuvres your Allies undertake. With a success on the Clash roll, you can transform that intent into action.

**To resolve the Clash, Make a WAR roll (or MANOEUVRE if Fleeing), modified by your foe's Might.**

Apply any advantages and complications for the Battle to this roll, along with any bonus dice gained as part of the leader focus. If an Archfoe is present, *lose (1d)*.

You can apply an Ally's Gift as a bonus to this roll. If you do, that Ally should be at the forefront of the action as you visualize the scene, and is the most exposed if the Band faces a cost.

### 4 RESOLVE THE CLASH

Set the result of the Clash round by applying successes or determining the nature of a failure.

**SUCCESS:** You gain 1 success to spend using the Clash Success table. Each Success icon on the Clash roll provides 1 additional success. If your Band's efforts were divided, you may allocate the successes across multiple actions.

**FAILURE:** You must make an Endurance Test for the Band (page XXX). In addition, any persistent advantages are lost.

**FAILURE WITH AN :** If the Clash roll fails with a icon, you also face a setback. Make the Endurance Test, and then roll on the Clash Setback table to reveal an additional consequence.

#### CLASH SUCCESS

| ACTION | DETAILS |
|---|---|
| Attack | Reduce a foe's Resistance by 1 point for each spent success. |
| Move towards an objective | Reduce an objective's Resistance by 1 point for each spent success. |
| Overcome a complication | Spend 1 success to remove a persistent complication. |
| Gain an advantage | Spend 1 success to gain a temporary advantage (1d). Spend 2 successes to make this (1d) advantage persistent. |
| Harry the Archfoe | Only select this option if your Player-hero is dueling an Archfoe. You *gain (1d)* for each spent success. Each of these bonus dice can be applied once to a roll in that confrontation, and must be used before the next Clash round. |

#### CLASH SETBACK

| FEAT DIE | DETAILS |
|---|---|
| | Baneful strike. Make an *Ill-favoured* Endurance Test. If that roll fails, the roll on the Injury Severity table is also *Ill-favoured*. |
| 1 | An Ally is targeted or stumbles into trouble. Add a persistent complication: *Ally in Danger*. If you fail to remove this complication in the next Clash roll, the Ally is harmed; make an *Ill-favoured* roll on the Injury Severity table (page XXX). |
| 2 | Your Player-hero is targeted with an unexpected attack. Make a successful AWARENESS roll, or receive a Wound. |
| 3 | The terrain fractures or favours the enemy. Make a successful MANOEUVRE roll to reposition, or make an Endurance Test and add a persistent complication: *Difficult Ground*. |
| 4 | Your foes gain ground or outflank you. Add a persistent complication: *Outmanoeuvred*. |
| 5 | Smoke or shadow obscures your foes. Add a persistent complication: *Enduring Darkness*. |
| 6 | You are cut-off from your Allies. For the next Leader Focus, your roll is *Ill-favoured*. If you are in the midst of a Duel, take no benefits from the Clash roll. |
| 7 | Fell presence. Your foes intimidate or frighten. Gain 2 Shadow points (dread), and add a persistent complication: *Hateful Foes*. |
| 8 | Escape is blocked. For the duration of the Battle, when you set your stance to Fleeing, the Clash roll is *Ill-favoured*. If you roll this result again, add a persistent complication: *They Are Too Many*. |
| 9 | Reinforcements appear. Increase your foe's Resistance by 3 |
| 10 | An Archfoe appears. If an Archfoe is already present, they rampage through your Band, and you *lose (2d)* on the next Clash roll instead of (1d). |
| | Your Band falters. Make a successful RALLY roll, or add a persistent complication: *Failing Morale*. |

# Duels

When you choose the Dueling focus and set yourself against an Archfoe, you take on a new perspective in the battle. The fight is resolved using the standard *The One Ring* combat rules, making full use of your equipment and abilities — and that of your enemy.

### ARCHFOE STATS

When Dueling an Archfoe, use the stats, combat proficiencies, and fell abilities as detailed in its full description.

### [SIDEBAR]CO-OP DUELS

**If playing co-op with another player, both Player-heroes can take part in the Duel. Manage the fight as you would a normal combat encounter in *The One Ring*.**

### MOVING BETWEEN DUELS AND CLASHES

Your duel occurs in a different timescale than the overall battle. Once engaged with an Archfoe, you will fight several rounds before returning to the Clash to see how your Allies are faring.

> When fighting a personal opponent in the midst of a larger-scale battle, play out three Close Quarters Rounds. Then pause the fight, resolve the next Clash, and return to your duel thereafter.

As long as you remain in the fight with the Archfoe, choose Duel as your leadership focus for the Clash. Then, after the Clash is resolved, play out another three Close Quarters Rounds in the duel. Imagine the chaos still raging in the background, slightly out of focus.

You can use a Success die as a timer for the next Clash, counting down from three.

### STANCES AND COMBAT TASKS

Once embroiled in a duel, set your stances as normal. If you are acting aggressively, put yourself in a Forward Stance. If you take a balanced approach, choose the Open stance. If you fight conservatively, take the Defensive Stance. If you are in a position to attack the Archfoe from afar, use the Rearward stance.

The normal considerations of stances and comparing the number of enemies to the number in the Company do not apply to a solo player. Instead, you should choose only from the stances that are justifiable in the current situation. If you are embroiled in a Close Quarters duel and can't reasonably fall back to pelt your Archfoe with arrows, do not take a Rearward stance.

In addition, not all Combat Tasks are available to the solo player. Since your Band is not considered a Company, you cannot select the Rally Comrades (Open Stance) and Protect Companion (Defensive Stance) Combat Tasks.

If you are using the Strider Mode supplement in your Moria campaign, you can also use the Skirmish Stance and Gain Ground Combat Task as described in that supplement.

### GAINING SUPPORT FROM YOUR BAND

If you gain one or more successes on the Clash roll, you can spend those successes to send your Allies against your Archfoe.

As noted in the Clash Success table (page XXX), each success spent to aid your fight against the Archfoe provides a (1d) bonus die to use within the scope of the duel. Each bonus die can be spent as follows.

- *Gain (1d)* on a skill roll or combat proficiency roll
- Or, roll and add the value of a Success die to the damage inflicted on a successful attack roll

If you gain multiple bonus dice, they can be spent on a single roll, or divided among rolls. However, all bonus dice must be used before the next Clash begins. Any unused dice are lost.

### ADVANTAGES AND COMPLICATIONS IN A DUEL

The complications and advantages in the larger battle are not necessarily a factor in your personal duel with an Archfoe. However, if an important aspect of the battlefield or situation carries over, use it to modify your rolls as appropriate.

Apart from that, the solo player must decide whether their Player-hero and their adversaries fight with advantages or complications.

Sometimes it's clear based on the environment and the circumstances of the battle — the Player-hero fights in knee-deep water or unleashes arrows over a great distance. Rolling a ᚠ rune or 👁 icon can also serve as a trigger for a complication or advantage to make a Duel more complex and interesting.

### ADVERSARY ACTIONS

When resolving a Clash, the actions of the enemy are folded into the result of the Clash roll. However, when dealing with an Archfoe, you are operating from the focused perspective of the standard *The One Ring* combat sequence. The back-and-forth of the fight is given more detail, and includes the choices and actions of your enemy. Thus, you find yourself in the unique position of controlling both your Player-hero and the Archfoe who stands against you.

Consider these suggestions when determining the actions of your enemy:

**WEAPONS:** Your Archfoe uses the weapon best suited to the situation, depending on the stance of the Player-hero. If multiple weapons apply, the adversary uses that which gives them the biggest advantage or greatest chance of dealing damage.

**SPECIAL DAMAGE:** When spending icons to trigger special damage from an adversary, use the Heavy Blow special damage result unless the adversary lists a special damage option in its stat block.

**FELL ABILITIES:** If using an adversary's Fell Ability would give them a clear advantage in combat, they use it, spending any Resolve/Hate required. If the ability would come at a cost, you can ask the Telling table (page XXX) to determine the enemy's behaviour.

### FIGHTING LONE FOES

The Battle rules are intended for pitched fights involving your Band and a group of foes. If you face a singular foe that is powerful enough to take on you and your Band single-handedly, you can give that enemy an appropriately intimidating Might and Resistance, and Battle as normal. Or you can use the guidelines for Duels to play out the combat with a focus on your Player-hero. If you treat it as a Duel, make a Clash roll every three rounds to see how your Band contributes to the fight.

Lone minor foes pose little risk to your Band. To quickly resolve a minor fight without making it a full-fledged battle, make a single WAR roll. On a success, the foe is defeated. With a failure the foe is defeated, but you suffer a cost such as an Endurance Test.

### PERSONAL COMBAT

When leading a Band, most combat encounters for your Player-hero occur amid the larger context of a Clash, or as a duel against an Archfoe. But you may find yourself in situations that force you to play out personal combat in detail, such as when away from your Band. Use these guidelines for Player-hero stances and adversary actions whenever your Player-hero fights using the standard *The One Ring* combat rules.

## Other Actions in Battle

The larger-scale perspective of a Battle will generally cover the actions of you and your enemies. You can incorporate objectives, advantages, and complications to help depict the ebb and flow of the fight and individual exploits.

However, if a risky and complex action doesn't fit in the framework of a Clash or Duel, you can make a skill roll for your Player-hero or a Disposition roll for your Band to resolve the task. Apply the success or consequences of this roll to the scene, and move back to the larger fight.

## The End of the Battle

If your foe's Resistance is reduced to zero, you are victorious. Depending on the nature of your foe, the characteristics of the battlefield, and your intent, this may mean the enemy combatants are killed outright, or that the survivors break and flee. If in doubt, ask the Telling table (page XXX).

The Battle is also over if your Band successfully flees, although you may find yourself on the run — hunted by those same enemy forces. See page XXX for details on how encounters and the noise of battle can increase the Hunt Threshold in Moria.

If the Battle goes against your Band, you might be moved to surrender. Note, however, that servants of the Enemy do not generally give quarter, unless under orders to take prisoners.

Finally, the Battle is done if you and your Band are killed or otherwise incapacitated. The long dark of Moria has claimed more Dwarven souls.

# COUNCILS

Councils represent social events of considerable import, often involving discussion of vital events or tense negotiations.

There are rare opportunities for Councils within the depths of Moria, but you may find need to make entreaties to Balin or other leaders between missions. As a valued member of the expedition, you have a voice in these Councils.

Councils for a solo player are resolved as described in *The One Ring* core rules (page XXX), with some further guidelines detailed below.

### SETTING RESISTANCE

As with *The One Ring* core rules, you begin a council by setting the resistance, based on your Player-hero's intended goal in the interaction — 3 for a reasonable request, 6 for a bold request, or 9 for an outrageous request.

If you're not sure what resistance your goal entails, choose two of the options, make one of them likely, and roll on the Telling Table (page XXX) to see if the answer is "yes" for the likely option. If not, it is the other.

### GAINING AID FROM YOUR BAND

As the appointed leader of your Band, you will take the lead in Council interactions. But if a member of your Band has a relevant gift, you can apply that bonus to your efforts.

### ROLEPLAYING INTERACTIONS

As a solo player, it might feel strange or unintuitive to roleplay with yourself. But it's important that your councils do not devolve into a series of dice rolls. Think through the discussions happening — the different motivations at play, and the disagreements that might arise.

When you have a specific question about a character's response during a Council, you can ask the Telling Table (page XXX) for a "yes" or "no" response. If you have a more general question about the nature of a topic or response, use the Lore Table (page XXX) and envision what the answer means in the context of the characters and conversation.

# JOURNEYS

Moria, despite its revered place in Dwarven history, is a place unknown to many. In the hands of the Shadow for centuries, it is a treacherous and unfamiliar site, far from the kingdom of light and warmth it once was. Journeys into the long dark, to map its roads and reclaim its chambers, are imperative to Balin's effort to retake the kingdom.

For a solo Player-hero, these journeys offer an opportunity to explore the depths of Moria, face uncertainties and danger, and put your abilities to the test. The structure of journeys in *The One Ring* is perfect for the solo player, because they tend to introduce encounters and obstacles organically.

Journeys within Moria for a solo player are resolved as described in *The One Ring* core rules (page XXX) and within this supplement (page XXX) — with a few changes as described in this section.

### WHEN TO USE THE JOURNEY RULES

As described in *The One Ring* core rules (page XXX), the rules for journey resolution should be used when travelling through dangerous territory. If there is enough uncertainty or danger to warrant a skill test, but the journey is not worthy of the full journey rules, you can see how you fare with a **TRAVEL** roll. This approach is particularly useful when returning to your Safe Haven along the same path (page XXX).

Most expeditions within Moria are inherently dangerous and uncertain. However, for mundane travel within safe territory, the fate of your journey can be resolved without any rolls.

### SETTING OFF INTO THE UNKNOWN

When playing *The One Ring* as part of a Company with a Loremaster, you would normally have limited knowledge of your destination and what lies along your path. As a solo player, you must balance the information needed to manage the journey with the viewpoint of your character.

To imagine your wanderings within Moria, use the tools this supplement provides for Loremasters, including the map of Moria, random tables, and landmark information. In addition, you can rely on the Telling Table (page XXX), Lore Table (page XXX), and other tables provided in these solo rules to help bridge the gap between your knowledge as a character and that which a Loremaster would normally provide.

At the start of the campaign, as both you and your Player-hero are newly arrived in Moria, you will rely on Loremaster tools without letting that information impact decisions from the perspective of your character. Once your Player-hero is well-travelled and experienced, a veteran of several missions, there will be more overlap for the information needed to manage the journey with your character's knowledge.

### JOURNEY ROLES

Journey roles are not used for the solo player. Instead, your Player-hero is the leader and guide of the expedition, and your Allies help set the pace — for better or worse. You still roll for Journey Events (page XXX), but those events are keyed directly to skills (for you) or Dispositions (for the Band) instead of roles.

For the Player-hero, skills used during Journey Events are **EXPLORE**, **AWARENESS**, and **CRAFT**. If the Band is a target of a Journey Event, you roll **MANOEUVRE**, **VIGILANCE**, or **EXPERTISE**. See page XXX for details.

## MARCHING TESTS

Use the process described below to resolve Marching Tests when your lone Player-hero is accompanied by a Band of Allies.

1. Make a **MANOEUVRE** roll for the Band. This determines the Band's ability to maintain the pace and follow your lead. If the roll is successful, *gain (1d)* on your **TRAVEL** roll, plus another (1d) for each Success icon. If the roll fails, *lose (1d)* on your **TRAVEL** roll.
2. Make the **TRAVEL** roll for your Player-hero, applying the bonus or penalty dice from your Band's roll. Within Moria, set the distance travelled as described on page XXX.
3. Resolve the Journey Event

## SOLO JOURNEY EVENTS

Follow the steps for Journey Event resolution as described on page 112 of *The One Ring* core rules. Since you don't assign roles, the target for an event is either your Player-hero or the Band. Choose as appropriate to the nature of the event, or leave it in the hands of fate by rolling a Skill die. Let an odd result be your Band, and an even result your Player-hero.

Roll on the Solo Journey Events Table to determine the event type. The table below is slightly modified from the version on page XXX. By default, journeys within Moria are within a Dark Land, and this roll is *Ill-favoured* — unless you have secured a foothold within Moria (page XXX).

**MORIA SOLO JOURNEY EVENTS**

| FEAT DIE ROLL | EVENT | CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL OR DISPOSITION ROLL | FATIGUE POINTS GAINED |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eye | Deadly Dark | If the roll fails, the target is Wounded, and Eye Awareness increases by 1. | 3 |
| 1–2 | The Long Dark of Moria | If the roll fails, gain 2 Shadow points (Dread). | 2 |
| 3–5 | Watchful Eyes | If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread), and Eye Awareness increases by 1. | 2 |
| 6–9 | Endlessly Branching Stairs and Passages | If the roll fails, add 1 day to the length of the journey, and the target gains 1 additional Fatigue. In addition, regardless of whether the roll is successful or not, roll on the Random Chamber Generator (page XXX). | 2 |
| 10 | The Right Way | If the roll succeeds, do not gain fatigue, and reduce the length of the journey by 1 day. | 1 |
| Gandalf rune | Dread and Wonder of Moria | If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread). If the roll succeeds, the Player-hero and Band regain 1 Hope instead. | – |

Once the event type is determined, choose one of the following options to help envision the nature of the event and the challenge or opportunity your character faces.

- Based on the result of the Journey Events Table, imagine an incident or opportunity in a way that fits the current situation and surroundings. Then, make a test using an appropriate Skill or Disposition: **EXPLORE**, **AWARENESS**, or **CRAFT** for the Player-hero, or **MANOEUVRE**, **VIGILANCE**, or **EXPERTISE** for the Band or a specific Ally. Check the Solo Journey Events table for the consequences of this skill roll.
- Reveal the nature of the event using an Event Detail Table (see below).

### EVENT DETAIL

To help envision the nature of an event, use an Event Detail table to expand on the information provided by the Solo Journey Events Table.

First, select the appropriate table for the type of event, and check your result by rolling one Success Die. To speed things along, you can roll this Success Die alongside your Feat Die when first rolling on the Journey Events table.

Take a moment to envision the nature of the incident or opportunity using the Event Detail prompt. If you need more information, you can use the Telling Table (page XXX) or Lore Table (page XXX) to answer questions about the event.

If the Band is the target for this event, consider which Ally is taking the lead in this situation. That Ally might have a useful Gift.

Once you have imagined the event and the action taken in response, make the indicated Skill roll (if your character is the target), or a Disposition roll (if the Band is the target).

Finally, resolve the scene using the consequence and Fatigue Points gained or lost as shown in each Event Detail table. Your Player-hero gains that amount of Fatigue points, and your Band must make an Endurance test modified by those Fatigue points (page XXX).

### EVENT DETAIL: DEADLY DARK

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sudden ambush | Noteworthy Encounter |
| 2 | Smoke and flame | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to avoid blistering heat |
| 3 | Goblin arrow slits | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to spot hidden alcoves |
| 4 | Crumbling ruins | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to escape the chaos |
| 5 | Lurking assassin | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to be forewarned of the attack |
| 6 | Noxious air | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to detect the poisonous fumes |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll fails, the target is Wounded, and Eye Awareness increases by 1.

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** 3

### EVENT DETAIL: THE LONG DARK OF MORIA

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dark-dwelling foes | Noteworthy Encounter |
| 2 | Endless ruination | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to gain a glimpse of former glories |
| 3 | Deepening shadows | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to find your way through |
| 4 | Oppressive silence | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to remain focused |
| 5 | Endless ruination | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to gain a glimpse of former glories |
| 6 | Drums in the Deep | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to navigate away from the burgeoning threat |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll fails, gain 2 Shadow points (Dread).

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** 2

### EVENT DETAIL: WATCHFUL EYES

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Swarming creatures | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to avoid their ire |
| 2 | Lone scout | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to silence the sentry |
| 3 | They are coming | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to build a barricade or seal the passage |
| 4 | Nameless fear | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to outrun the lurking presence |
| 5 | Pits and tripwires | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to steer clear of Orc-laid hazards |
| 6 | Graven image | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to tear it down |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread), and Eye Awareness increases by 1.

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** 2

### EVENT DETAIL: ENDLESSLY BRANCHING STAIRS AND PASSAGES

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Maddening roads | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to keep your wits |
| 2 | Flooded passage | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to make or find an exit |
| 3 | Dizzying heights | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to safely traverse |
| 4 | Unstable terrain | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to keep your footing |
| 5 | Collapsed tunnel | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to clear the way |
| 6 | Dead-end corridor | EXPLORE (or EXPERTISE) to retrace steps |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll fails, add 1 day to the length of the journey, and the target gains 1 additional Fatigue. In addition, regardless of whether the roll is successful or not, roll on the Random Chamber Generator (page XXX).

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** 2

### EVENT DETAIL: THE RIGHT WAY

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Familiar waypoint | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to understand its significance |
| 2 | Unspoiled chambers | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to walk unbroken roads |
| 3 | Plunging watercourse | EXPLORE (or EXPERTISE) to navigate its currents |
| 4 | Glimmer in the dark | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to illuminate the way |
| 5 | Well-trod path | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to keep to the trail |
| 6 | Fellow delvers | Noteworthy Encounter |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll succeeds, do not gain fatigue, and reduce the length of the journey by 1 day.

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** 1

### EVENT DETAIL: CHANCE MEETING

| SUCCESS DIE | EVENT | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Kingly hall | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to map its confines |
| 2 | Buried secrets | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to spot among the rubble |
| 3 | Ancient mechanism | CRAFT (or EXPERTISE) to restore its function |
| 4 | Monuments to ancient glories | EXPLORE (or MANOEUVRE) to reveal their former grandeur |
| 5 | Echoes of forgotten lives | AWARENESS (or VIGILANCE) to find their mementos |
| 6 | Remote outpost | Noteworthy Encounter |

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE SKILL ROLL:** If the roll fails, the target gains 1 Shadow point (Dread). If the roll succeeds, the Player-hero and Band regain 1 Hope instead.

**FATIGUE POINTS GAINED:** —

## NOTEWORTHY ENCOUNTERS

A Noteworthy Encounter result on an Event Detail table indicates an event that should not be resolved with a single skill roll. Instead, give this event additional focus by treating it as an extended encounter or scene. This scene might incorporate skill rolls, combat, council, or a Skill Endeavour as appropriate.

### MAKING JOURNEYS COME ALIVE

For a solo player, there may be a tendency to move through the journey sequence without giving focus to the ongoing narrative. Avoid this by taking the time to plan your navigation as your character would, with the limited information available to them. Then, after each marching test or event, imagine the details of the adventure. How do your Allies fare? What is the nature of the path? What do you see or encounter? Where do you rest and how do those surroundings inspire you or put you on edge? Use tools such as the Telling Table and the descriptions of Moria environs in this supplement to help inspire your imaginings of this ancient place.

You can also choose to translate any of the detailed event results into a Noteworthy Encounter instead of using a single skill test. In this way, you give a specific challenge or opportunity more focus if it is interesting to you or especially relevant to your Player-hero or their quests. Overcoming a significant challenge as part of a Noteworthy Event can then provide experience as a Player-hero milestone (page XXX).

### RESOLVING EVENTS FOR A NOTEWORTHY ENCOUNTER

For a noteworthy encounter that is not decided using a single skill roll, you still need to determine the overall outcome when applying the consequences for your Journey Event. To do so, decide if the event was ultimately favourable for your character.

- If you managed to overcome a challenge or had an overall positive event, treat it as a successful skill roll.
- If you failed to overcome a challenge, or faced severe hardships or complications, use the failed result.

## RETURNING TO YOUR SAFE HAVEN

If the nature of your Mission in Moria is a round trip — reaching a landmark or destination, completing a mission, and returning to the Safe Haven — it may not be worth playing out the return journey in detail.

To quickly resolve a return journey to your Safe Haven, make a single Travel test. On a successful roll, you arrive without incident. If the roll fails, introduce a Journey Event. Once the event is resolved, continue safely to your destination.

# FELLOWSHIP PHASE

In the Fellowship Phase, your Player-hero and their Band of Allies return to Balin's camp in the First Hall to rest, recuperate, and undertake downtime activities — healing, communing with Balin and other members of the expedition, and preparing for the next journey into the Dwarrowdelf.

The structure of the Fellowship Phase is largely unchanged for the solo player, with some exceptions and additions as noted below.

### SETTING THE DURATION

Within Moria, darkness is always at your doorstep. Unfortunately for the harried Dwarves of Balin's expedition, the time spent in fellowship is time given over to the minions of Shadow. Delays will turn the advantage to your foes, lowering the Hunt Threshold (page XXX) when you next set off on a mission. But these delays might be necessary to rest and recuperate from the hardships of your mission.

When playing a solo campaign, choose the duration of your Fellowship Phase and the associated recoveries and activities according to the summaries below. These guidelines simplify timekeeping and bookkeeping for Player-hero Wounds and Band conditions.

**HURRIED (HOURS):** You must set off on an urgent mission, leaving little time for rest or fellowship.

- Recover all Player-hero Endurance
- Clear any fleeting or moderate injuries among your Allies
- There is no time for Undertakings

**BRIEF (DAYS):** You take time to rest and recuperate, but do not linger.

- Recover Hope points equal to Player-hero **HEART** score
- Remove 1–3 Shadow points (see page XXX).
- Recover all Player-hero Endurance
- Clear any fleeting or moderate injuries among your Allies
- Clear fatigued and faltering conditions among your Allies
- Heal Player-hero Wound, unless you suffered a Dying Wound
- You may perform one undertaking

**EXTENDED (WEEKS):** You push away the darkness, taking time to fully recover.

- Recover all Hope points
- Remove 1–3 Shadow points (see page XXX).
- Recover all Player-hero Endurance
- Heal Player-hero Wound
- Clear all injury and fatigue conditions among your Allies
- You may perform two undertakings

**YULE (MONTHS):** You and your Allies leave Moria for a time, heading your separate ways to spend a season among family and folk.

- Recover all Hope points
- Player-hero earns a number of bonus Skill points equal to their **WITS** rating
- Remove 1–3 Shadow points (see page XXX).
- Recover all Player-hero Endurance
- Heal Player-hero Wound
- Clear all injury and fatigue conditions among your Allies
- You may perform three undertakings, including Yule undertakings

## Improving Allies

Your goal as a leader among Balin's expedition is to eventually assemble an entire Band of proven Allies. While performing updates for your Player-hero during a Fellowship Phase, you can choose to award one surviving Ally with Hardened status. Pick an Ally who demonstrated exceptional skill, bravery, or loyalty during your most recent Mission, and note them as Hardened on their Ally card.

> The presence of Hardened Allies boosts your Readiness for a mission as outlined on page XXX.

Only award Hardened status at the conclusion of challenging missions and for worthy deeds. Optionally, you can also give a Hardened Ally a title celebrating a deed or quality, and add that to their name on their Ally Card.

### Kingly Gifts

Marvellous Artefacts, Wondrous Items, and Famous Weapons or Armour are fitting gifts for a proven Ally. If you have recovered such treasures in the course of your adventures, granting them to a Hardened Ally is a noble recognition of their valour and sacrifice.

The characteristics of these rewards are not detailed as they would be for a Player-hero. Instead, their main quality is marked as a second Gift usable by that Ally. This Gift functions as normal — offering a bonus Success die on related actions by that Ally or the Band (page XXX), and cannot be combined with other Gifts.

However, Famous Weapons or Armour among your Band will also increase your starting Eye Awareness when setting off on a mission (page XXX).

## New Undertaking: Recruit Allies

As you prove your leadership, others will flock to your banner.

> Choose this undertaking to expand your ranks. If your Band numbers fewer than four, gain Allies up to four. Otherwise, gain one Ally for every rank in **VALOUR**. These Allies are added to the overall roster for your Band, and can be selected for missions.

## Spiritual Recovery for the Solo Player

As detailed on page XXX of *The One Ring* core rules, the Loremaster would normally determine the number of Shadow points to remove during the Fellowship Phase. As a solo player, you instead decide how many Shadow points to remove based on how your actions have impacted the fight against the encroaching Shadow.

- If your actions have at least marginally interfered with the return of the Shadow, recover 1 Shadow point;
- If your deeds have actively hindered or damaged the Enemy, remove 2 Shadow points;
- If you have committed feats that would gain the attention of the Dark Lord himself, or at least one of his major servants, remove 3 Shadow points

### ROLEPLAYING THE FELLOWSHIP PHASE

Take the time to imagine your interactions and activities during the Fellowship Phase. For your Player-hero, this is a welcome opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of your Band and other kinfolk. Much of what defines the story of your character is how they relate to others, and what personal goals they pursue with the comfort of safety and time.

# The End of All Things

*"All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us."*

Your missions into Moria in this solo campaign are assumed to occur through the beginning and heights of Balin's five-year expedition, when hope seemed a tangible thing, and the embers of a restored Khazad-dûm took flame in the hearts of many Dwarves.

You can mark the end of your campaign once you successfully build a Band of twelve Hardened Allies and undertake a final great mission into the depths of Moria. There is time within the scope of Balin's expedition to become a hero — or to fall to Shadow or death.

## Balin's Fall

Despite your efforts, and those of countless other brave Dwarves, the Shadow eventually repels Balin's valiant campaign, and the King of Moria and every Dwarf who accompanied him dies at the vile hands of Goblins. The exploits of your Band — their brave deeds, triumphs against the Shadow, and hopes for the future — are lost to time.

But perhaps the history of your Band is written in the crumbling pages of a journal, abandoned in those silent halls, waiting to be uncovered by a new expedition into Moria…